HECTOR MACDONALD

BIRTHPLACE—ROOTFIELD

HECTOR MACDONALD.

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.

BY

DAVID L. CROMB.

"Better than martial woe and the pageant of civil sorrow,
Better than praise to-day or the statue we build to-morrow,
Better than honour and glory from history's iron pen,
Is the thought of duty done and the love of his fellow-men."

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ENEAS MACKAY, 43 MURRAY PLACE.

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WAR SERVICES AND HONOURS

OF

GENERAL MACDONALD.

1879—Afghan War—Medal with three clasps. Promoted to Second-Lieutenant.

1881—Majuba, mentioned in despatches.

1885—Soudan Expedition.

1889-91—Soudan Expedition. Gamaziah—Third-Class Order of Medjidieh; Toski—two clasps, D.S.O.; Tokar—Third-Class Order of Osmanieh, clasp to bronze star.

1896—Dongola Expedition—Brevet-Lieut.-Colonel.

1897—Nile Expedition, in command of an Egyptian Brigade.

1898—Omdurman—two clasps, A.D.C. to the Queen, promoted to Colonel.

1900—South Africa, in command of Highland Brigade, twice mentioned in despatches, Knighthood.

HECTOR MACDONALD.

Dead in his prime, the valiant soldier-chief,
Passed forth beyond the reach of envious sneer:
Vex not his ghost with unavailing grief,
But lay him softly on a warrior's bier.

That stalwart form, those limbs of generous mould,
Those flashing eyes bespake a king of men:
The heart that beat with courage high is cold,
And sorrow darkens many a Scottish glen.

Death, whom he braved so oft, has conquered now,
Yet memory lingers o'er the deeds he wrought,
The splendid laurels that enwreathed his brow,
The crowding honours that the years still brought.

No perfumed, pampered, jewelled lordling this,
But fashioned grandly—every inch a man;
Let slimy creatures mouth and meanly hiss
Malevolent venom—speak the truth you can.

The gallant heart that, counting not the cost,
Rushed with his handful on the Afghan spears
And back the tide of savage warriors tossed,
While steep to steep echoed the Highland cheers.

The man who grimly on Majuba's crest
For seven long hours withstood the bullet-rain,
While closer, fiercer still the assailants pressed,
Till every slope was reddened with the slain.

The leader born who, in that fateful hour,
When Britain's star waxed dim at Omdurman,
Over the stricken field was seen to tower,
And saved the battle with his dusky clan.

The best of men are mortal at the best,
Let him who's perfect cast the offensive stone,
But we who loved him reverence his rest,
And mourn his fervent life untimely flown.

Set in the balance thirty strenuous years,
When hand and heart and brain sought Britain's weal,
And hide with pitying, purifying tears
One spot that instinct asks us to conceal.

Judge not the dead: remember how for you
Not once nor twice his warm blood dyed the sod;
Weave him a wreath of laurel and of rue,
And leave him to the mercy of his God.

W. STEWART THOMSON.

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NATIONAL MEMORIAL

TO THE LATE

Major-General Sir HECTOR MACDONALD,

Instituted by the Town Council of Dingwall.

[*SPECIMEN SUBSCRIPTION FORM.*]

The Gaelic Society of Stirling's Subscription List.

.....*1903.*

To Mr. J. A. Gordon,
Hon. Treasurer, G.S.S.,
12 Barnton Street, Stirling.

Dear Sir,

Herewith I enclose the sum of.....
towards the National Memorial *to the late* Sir Hector Macdonald. *Receipt will be sent.*

Name, ...

Address, ...

For kind permission to reproduce the illustrations in this volume the publisher is indebted to Messrs. Maclure & Macdonald, Glasgow; John Munro, Dingwall; David Whyte, Inverness; and to members of the family.

INTRODUCTION.

ON the 25th day of March, 1903, in a bedroom of a hotel in the Rue de Rivoli, Paris, Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald, of the British Army, died by his own hand. Wherever brave men and brave deeds are honoured, the news was received with poignant grief; but nowhere was the sorrow more heartfelt or more personal than in his native Scotland. Everyone was proud of Sir Hector; his unique career had endeared him to all; and by Scotsmen the world over his untimely end was regarded as little less than a national disaster.

Scotsmen are not amongst those who think that his last act was a proof of his guilt of the charges that were to be brought against him, nor are we concerned with the nature of these charges. We care only to know that a great career has ended in a pathetic tragedy.

The story of Hector Macdonald is known in every household in the British Isles; and in the homes

of Scotland and England his steady advancement from the ranks to the command of the Highland Brigade was noted with an almost personal gratification. He entered the army with a determination to get on; but class prejudice and military caste opposed his every step. It is not difficult to imagine the nature of the influences he had to contend against, or the intrigues that only his indomitable courage enabled him to surmount.

He was without friends, a "ranker" holding his own with the bluest blood of Britain; and we have no doubt that this brave yet lonely man brooded in solitude over injustice which he keenly resented, but had perforce to endure. If we do not seek to ask why he should prefer death to facing his accusers, it is because we know and understand the sensitive Highland nature.

General Macdonald's life was one of devoted service to his country: in Afghanistan, Egypt, and South Africa, he faced death on many a battlefield, and in the military annals of Great Britain it will be difficult to find a career more arduous. Every step of his upward path was carved by himself. His high sense of duty, ambition, determination, strong force of character, and remarkable courage of heart carried him irresistibly forward. And now all is ended. This little

biography may not do full justice to the dead hero, but at least it should serve to show that in his lamented death, Scotland has lost one of her bravest sons.

The details employed in the production of this work have been gathered from many sources; and to the different magazines and newspapers from which information has been culled a grateful acknowledgment is hereby given.

D. L. CROMB.

DUNDEE, *April, 1903.*

CHAPTER I

His Early Days—He Joins the Gay Gordons.

HECTOR ARCHIBALD MACDONALD was born at Rootfield, near Dingwall, Ross-shire, on 13th April, 1853. His father was a crofter, and his home was a humble lime-washed, thatched cottage. Ann Boyd, his mother, was a daughter of the late Mr. John Boyd, of Killiechoilum and of Cradlehall, near Inverness. This John Boyd was descended from the Earl of Kilmarnock Boyds, so that, on his mother's side at least, young Hector had noble ancestry. William Macdonald, of Rootfield, in addition to being a small farmer, was also a stonemason, and it was while he was erecting a steading on one of John Boyd's places that Cupid played havoc with him and Ann Boyd. The course of true love did not run smooth in this instance, as Ann's father objected to the marriage. Ann was resolute, however, and against her father's wishes she married Macdonald. Five sons were born of the union. Four of them led quiet, uneventful lives, but the fifth son—Hector—was a soldier whose deeds of daring were one day to make the countryside ring.

The day on which young Hector was born was wild and tempestuous. Snow lay on the moor, and blinding showers rattled on the window panes of the humble dwelling. A neighbouring crofter woman made her way through the storm to inquire as to the state of the expectant mother, and on being informed that a son had been born, she exclaimed in Gaelic, "Well, well, what a night to come; he must be a tough one."

"Fitting place this Mulbuie to rear the future soldier. The view from the crofter's house is magnificent. The prospect is one of rugged, inspiring grandeur. Standing at the door, Ben Wyvis, the Sutherlandshire peaks, and the Cromarty Firth to the north, and on a clear day the 'Pap' of Caithness are visible. On the west rise the Strathconan hills in serrated, irregular outline, while on the south, the Beauly and Moray Firths with the varied scenery of Inverness-shire for miles are in view.

"The soil of the moor is hard and stony, heather-bound, and uncongenial to work, and it was this the hardy crofters by incessant labour had to subjugate and make fit to grow the 'staff of life.' In this arduous toil our hero sustained his part—'ploughing with pain his native lea' at 12 years of age, and able to draw a straight furrow. It was in such environment and employments that young Hector was moulded and the foundation of that iron constitution laid which enabled him to 'breast the blows of circumstance' and grapple with and overcome many a foe."

The future General was educated, along with his

brothers, at the Schoolhouse, Mulbuie; but, as was the case in Scotland in those days, his schooling was neither extensive nor deep. Still, what he did learn he remembered; one of his characteristics being his determination to master anything he took up. His parents were in humble circumstances, and young Hector had to amplify the family revenue in intervals of schooling by tending cattle, doing odd jobs, and assisting as stable boy at Kinkel Castle Farm. His early days were thus spent after the fashion of many another country lad. He was ambitious and conscientious, but there was nothing in his youth to foretell his future greatness.

At the age of fifteen Hector was sent out to face the world. He went to Dingwall, and, much to the satisfaction of his parents, he was apprenticed to a draper. After a short stay in Dingwall young Macdonald reached Inverness, where he entered the shop of Mr. William Mackay, of the Clan Tartan and Tweed Warehouse. Hector was now a well-set-up youth, strong, healthy, and full of spirits, and naturally he found the duties of a shopman rather irksome. As a relaxation, he joined the Merchant Company of the local volunteers, and this was the beginning of his martial career. He chafed at his indoor occupation. His wild, free nature rebelled against being cooped up in a shop, but he stuck to the counter until he could stand it no longer. His volunteer experiences had planted in his breast a love of soldiering, and at length he fixed his eyes on the Army.

One morning in June, 1870, he enlisted in the

Ninety-Second Gordon Highlanders, much to the grief of his parents and friends, who were not enamoured with his choice of a fighting life. The following year he joined his battalion in India, where he began in earnest his soldier's career.

His mother had all a decent Highland "body's" dislike of the "sodgers." "I wad rather hae seen him buried," was all she said when she learned that her son had taken the shilling.

Many stories are told of Hector's doings during the two years he spent in Inverness. A Ross-shire woman, now married and residing in London, was for some time a shop girl behind the same counter. She remembered the first day he came, "a braw loon, wi' een like lowin' coal. And the great broad shoothers o' him! He was mair like a smith than a draper. But, mind ye, there was naething surly aboot Hector, as we got to ca' him. He was terrible obleegin': aye offerin' to lift up or doon bundles for us lassies. The only thing that used to put him oot o' temper was a fikey customer. And there's lots o' them in Inverness. Of course, he didna let on till they had gane; but then he got dour a wee, and wud mutter things to himsel'."

This old lady remembers his joining the volunteers, and how he carried a drill instruction book to the shop, and pored over it whenever there was a chance. Often he would take a sly peep at it, and then go on with his work, as she thought committing some rules to memory. He was "doonricht mad on volunteering."

Bearing out her avowal of Hector's obliging disposi-

MACDONALD AS A DRAPER'S ASSISTANT.

tion towards the girls, she tells a delightful story of tea-drinking in the shop. The master was strongly opposed to the practice, and had warned them of instant dismissal on the next offence. One afternoon a surreptitious tea party was in progress behind a screen. Hector saw the "boss" coming, and contrived a neat dodge to save the lassies. Taking up a yard-stick, and meeting the governor half-way, he pretended to be chasing a rat, getting him to stop and join in the sham pursuit, while at the same time he created sufficient commotion to alarm the tea-drinkers, who thus narrowly escaped detection and the threatened consequences. He was their hero for many days afterwards. "Still," said Mrs. ——, "we a' thocht Hector Macdonald had mista'en his calling."

Indeed he had. But it was no uncommon thing for Scottish lads to have their calling chosen for them, and there was an air of respectability about the drapery business to commend it. Hector, however, apparently liked it none the better for that, and one day he did not come to the shop. He was a Gordon Highlander before night, impelled to the irrevocable step by an irresistible inborn craving for a soldier's life. In those days the army was generally regarded as the proper sphere for ne'er-do-weels and winna-works, to neither of which classes Hector Macdonald belonged. But an old pensioner, who entered the shop and learned what had become of him, sagely remarked, "Aweel, lassie. tak' my word for it, he's in his nat'ral element noo. The Queen's shilling never made a better bargain."

The sequel abundantly attested the truth of the pensioner's saying.

In his apprenticeship days, Hector shared his lodgings with a young lad named William Mathie. Hector had at this time a hankering for the gun and the kilt, and in fostering his love of soldiering he gave Mathie a rather bad time. Often as early as five o'clock in the morning, Hector would rout Mathie out of his bed, and whether that gentleman liked it or not, he had to give the future commander of the Highland Brigade lessons in drill.

Mr. Mackay, his employer, was rather annoyed when he learned that his apprentice had donned the red tunic. "Well, I am sorry for this," Mr. Mackay remarked to his manager, "for I liked Hector, and thought a great deal of him. He'll only regret it once, and that'll be all his lifetime." Mr. Mackay's pessimistic view was not realised, and it may be remarked here that no one took a keener interest in Hector's future than his old employer. Years afterwards Hector remembered him, and although it is a little out of its chronological order, a letter from Macdonald to Mr. Mackay may be given here. It was written when his deeds were being sung over the length and breadth of the land, and shows that success did not spoil the modest, unassuming soldier.

"Many a time," he wrote, "I have been on the eve of writing you to ask your forgiveness for my delinquency, but I became faint-hearted, and feared being snubbed. And, to tell the truth, I might not have had

the courage to do so now had it not been for a cutting from a newspaper which I saw, in which it was stated that I had served as an assistant at another draper's establishment. It opened a way for me to address you, for I felt not a little nettled—vain man!—at being put down as Mr. ——'s production, whereas, should anybody be credited with knocking sense into a stupid head, it should be you, and you alone. 'What you taught—punctuality, order, cleanliness, method, implicit faith, and obedience—are the main attributes of a good soldier."

CHAPTER II.

In India—With the Kabul Field Force—He Wins a Commission.

AFTER joining his battalion in India, young Macdonald was not long in attracting the favourable notice of his superiors. He threw himself heart and soul into his profession, and was most thorough in the performance of all his duties. His personal qualities were also of the highest, as, besides being studious and hard-working, he was a non-smoker and most abstemious. During the Prince of Wales' Indian tour in 1875-76, he formed one of the guard of honour, and he was also at the great assemblage in Delhi on January 1, 1877, when the late Queen was proclaimed Empress of India.

In the piping times of peace promotion is not usually rapid, still, when the Afghan war broke out in 1879, Hector had attained the rank of colour-sergeant. He was drill corporal in 1872, sergeant in 1873, and colour-sergeant in 1874. His good conduct and observance of duty had recommended him to his colonel, and that worthy, in giving him his sergeant's stripes, told him that a sergeantship in the Gordons was an honour equal to being a member of Parliament.

In 1879 the Kabul Field Force, Sir Frederick

Roberts in command, advanced into Afghanistan with the Ninety-Second Gordon Highlanders constituting part of the First Infantry Brigade. Hector Macdonald was only a unit in the large army, yet it was in this march that he played his first high stake for fortune. Roberts was pushing forward through a dark and frowning Afghan defile when an advance guard of Sikhs discovered an ambush of 2000 Afghans, with every advantage of position, barring the way through the rocky gorge.

Sir Frederick Roberts and his staff, with a small escort of native cavalry and some details of Lancers, were moving towards the scene of the engagement, and the ambuscade of Afghans was placed to capture the staff. Hector Macdonald obtained leave to reconnoitre.

Forward to the assistance of the Sikhs he rushed with a handful of the 92nd, and, taking over the command of the whole party from the Sikh captain, at once in real earnest set about clearing the pass. A stream had to be crossed, precipitous rocks surmounted, and strongly held positions assailed before any impression could be made upon the enemy. But Macdonald's action was neither tentative nor feeble. He attacked with the dogged resolution of a man determined to win. From point to point with unflinching courage he led his followers, with rare skill he effected his dispositions, gradually he closed and grappled with the surprised foe, and drove him out of his fastnesses. In a short half-hour the gorge was cleared, and the safe passage of the general and staff assured.

The general in command of such an expedition as this has many things to think of and many claims to distinction to satisfy before he can reach down so far as humble supernumeraries, however deserving. But another eye had seen Macdonald's feat, and resolved it should be remembered. The chief of Sir Frederick Roberts' staff was Colonel (afterwards Major-General Sir) Charles Metcalf Macgregor, one of the ablest, bravest, toughest, and most honourable men that ever graced Her Majesty's service. He went to the Commander-in-Chief, and in his own straightforward, bluff way urged that something should be done for the gallant young soldier. And on the same evening he wrote triumphantly in his diary—"Got General to put in an order about Sergeant Macdonald, who behaved very well." To Colonel Macgregor, therefore, was it due that Hector Macdonald obtained his first mention in despatches. In his "Forty-One Years in India," Roberts refers in warm terms to the achievement, while in a despatch he wrote thus:—"The energy and skill with which this party was commanded reflected the highest credit on Colour-Sergeant Hector Macdonald, 92nd Highlanders, and Zemindar Shere Mahomed, 3rd Sikhs. But for their excellent services on this occasion, it might probably have been impossible to carry out the programme of our march."

In the wild fighting for dear life that occurred around Kabul in the middle of the succeeding December, when every man of the Gordons vied with his comrades in the performance of prodigies of valour,

Hector Macdonald was again and again conspicuous, and it was the same watchful eye that noted him for distinction.

Colonel Macgregor again went to Roberts on behalf of the hero, and succeeded so well that he was able to write in his diary on January 2nd, 1880:—"Told General about Sergeant Macdonald of the 72nd (an evident misprint for 92nd), who behaved very well on the 12th and 13th. Hope to get him a commission." As all the world knows, General Roberts did give him a commission, but one can read in the simple language of Sir Charles Macgregor the genesis of the idea.

The value of a recommendation for distinction from Macgregor may be better understood if we append just one anecdote to show what manner of man he was. "When we were shut up in Sherpur," writes a very distinguished officer, "the defence of the headquarter gateway had been given to a certain senior officer who, between ourselves, was a bit nervous. When his defences were prepared, he went to Colonel Macgregor and said—

"'Now I have done the best I can, but what shall I do if the enemy force their way into the gate in overwhelming numbers, as I have no reserve to fall back upon?' '*Turn 'em out!*' gruffly remarked the chief of the staff. 'Yes, of course,' said ——, 'but if they are too strong for us?' 'TURN THEM OUT!' roared Macgregor, '*that's what you're there for!*' and no other answer would he give him, as of course it was the first thing he would have done himself in a similar

case. It was thoroughly characteristic of the man." Sir Charles Macgregor was not one who took an indulgent view of duty, and he never commended where commendation had not been strenuously earned. His instincts in commending Hector Macdonald for promotion were amply justified.

In his despatch dealing with the battle of Charasiah, General Roberts wrote :—" Colour-Sergeant Hector Macdonald, a non-commissioned officer, whose excellent and skilful management of a small detachment when opposed to immensely superior numbers in the Hazardarakht defile was mentioned in my dispatch of the 15th inst., here again distinguished himself."

Along with the Gordon Highlanders Hector Macdonald took part in the memorable march from Kabul to Kandahar. On the 8th of August, 1880, the column, numbering 10,000 men of all arms, set out to cover the 300 miles that separated them from the sorely-pressed garrison ; and twenty-three days later the small army arrived in front of the beleaguered town. The march itself was no ordinary task. Miles of sterile, rocky, trackless desert were followed by awesome passes, dense jungles, and solitary ravines ; while the burning sun, the want of water, the ever-present danger of attack from an armed and hostile populace had all to be contended with. The Ninety-Second stood the march splendidly, and were immediately in the thick of the fighting when the column came into touch with the Afghans.

The Gordons, under the command of Brigadier Macpherson, were ordered to drive the enemy from a

village, and, aided by the Ghoorkas, they performed their work in magnificent style. The Highlanders' bayonet charge was met by the fierce Afghans, and for a time there was a terrific hand-to-hand struggle. The wild Ghazees again and again threw themselves upon the Gordons, but the 92nd held their ground, and none fought with more stubborn courage than Hector Macdonald. Using his immense strength he parried and lunged, and at last by sheer force the enemy was driven from his position.

At the end of the campaign, Hector was offered the choice between a Victoria Cross and a commission. He selected the latter, and was thereupon appointed to a Second Lieutenantship in the Gordons. This achievement of an erstwhile private soldier winning a commission in his own regiment was so rare, that his fellow-officers, to show their due appreciation of the remarkable event, presented him with his sword. Thus, in nine years from the date of his enlistment, we find Hector Macdonald an officer in the regiment he had joined as a private.

CHAPTER III.

At Majuba Hill—"Don't Shoot a Brave Man"—His Marriage.

WITH their Kabul and Kandahar honours fresh upon them, the 92nd Gordon Highlanders were hurried off to South Africa to take part in the Transvaal campaign of 1881. Ingogo and Laing's Nek had been fought, and the Gordons joined Sir George Colley in time to take part in the ill-fated enterprise of Majuba. Three companies of the Ninety-Second were included in the little force which climbed the hill on the evening of 25th February. The Highlanders were under the command of Major Hay, and among the officers was Second-Lieutenant Hector Macdonald. The climb up the hillside was long and arduous. The path was rugged and steep, intersected with watercourses, obstructed by boulders. Hand over hand in inky darkness the soldiers made their way to the top. The march-off from camp had begun at ten o'clock; it was half-past five when the last of the Gordons reached the summit of Majuba.

The top of the hill was shaped like a saucer, and the little force was placed in an attenuated line round the rim. A body of Gordons lined the slope which ultimately became the point of the Boers' direct attack

—the extreme left of the Highlanders' position being allocated to Hector Macdonald and eighteen men. The post was a spur or kopje projecting from the hillside and descending precipitously to the valley over 6000 feet below. It contained no cover save a stone boulder here and there, behind which a man might lie partially protected. Another kopje was held by Lieutenant Ian (now General) Hamilton, and after the battle developed it soon became evident that these two spurs were to be the objective of the Boers' main attack. The early stages of the fight may be passed over. The British troops spent a lot of valuable ammunition at an enemy who at the beginning was out of range, and who later was out of sight. Bullets rained over the posts held by Hamilton and Macdonald.

A shout to retire sent some men to the rear, but Macdonald, revolver in hand, faced the foe, with stern, dogged resolution, encouraging his men with every encouragement that invincible valour could suggest. His post had become a shambles: dead and dying lay huddled together. At length a volley swept every corner of the kopje, and nearly every man of Macdonald's heroic little band had fallen. Eight were dead; the rest were wounded to a man. He alone stood untouched. When at last the victors leapt from their concealment, and swarmed over the brow of the hill with shouts of triumph, Macdonald, too proud to leave his fallen comrades, grimly awaited their onslaught. For seven hours he had defended his post with unsurpassed valour, and the end of that long and

terrible struggle found him a prisoner. Two Boers threw themselves on Macdonald to secure his sword, but he used his fists to such purpose that they had to beat a retreat. They were on the point of shooting him in cold blood, when a Boer commandant interfered. "Don't shoot a brave man," he said, and the Boers reluctantly drew off. General Joubert read the presentation inscription on his sword, and personally saw that it was returned to him.

Much has been written about this unfortunate fight. It was a melancholy disaster—one for which the Boers were less to blame than ourselves; but we had no reason to regret the valour of the officers and men. They did all that men could do, and the conduct of Hector Macdonald and his gallant little band of Gordons was quite in keeping with the noblest traditions of the regiment. For his gallantry Macdonald received further promotion, and was again mentioned in despatches.

In January, 1884, Hector, while stationed in Edinburgh, married Miss Christina MacDonald Duncan, the daughter of a Perth teacher. Hector made her acquaintance in the spring of 1882. The marriage was a quiet one, and at his request the union was not made public. This action of Hector's has been much criticised, but it was most natural from his point of view. His profession was his first consideration, and it is most probable that he wished the War Office kept in ignorance in order that his future advancement should not be jeopardised. It must also be remembered that

he was a subaltern, and that subalterns are not usually in a position to marry. Of course, it may be argued that under these circumstances he ought not to have married; and to that there is no answer. There was one child of the marriage, a boy, who was named Hector.

CHAPTER IV.

Soudan Experiences—His Work Among the Blacks.

IN the early eighties the war drums were beating in the Soudan, and here, after a short respite, we find Lieutenant Macdonald. With his regiment, the Gordon Highlanders, he took part in the attempt to succour General Gordon in 1884-85. This was his first taste of the Soudan, the "wretched, dry Soudan," with its scorching suns and blinding sand storms, but it was on this parched desert that he was to make his name world-famous. For a few months he acted as Garrison Adjutant at Assioŭt, a post which he relinquished for the Egyptian Constabulary. A short stay in the gendarmerie was sufficient to give him a knowledge of Arabic; then in 1887 he joined the Egyptian Army, devoting his nights to study and his days to drilling his Soudanese troops.

In January, 1888, he was raised to the rank of captain, and then came the order to join Sir Francis Grenfell's army in its operations against the Dervishes. He commanded the 11th Soudanese at the siege of Suakim, but it was at Gemaizah in December of the same year that Macdonald demonstrated the high state

of efficiency to which he had brought his blacks. At one part of the fight they almost got out of hand. In their anxiety to get at the enemy they broke their formation, and Macdonald, after swearing at them in Arabic and Hindustani, finally abused them in broad Scots. This failing to take effect, he boldly rode up and down in front of their rifles, and under a heavy fire succeeded in quietening them.

In his official report about the work of Captain Macdonald and his Soudanese, the Sirdar, General Sir Francis Grenfell, wrote:—

"The Soudanese troops of Colonel Kitchener and Colonel Smith's brigades, led by English officers, amply justified my confidence in them. The Soudanese soldiers behaved not only with gallantry, but steadiness. They advanced three hundred yards under fire without firing a shot; and even when the trenches were reached they did not entirely lose their formation. Led by British officers, the Black Brigade will become a powerful engine. The black not only hates the Dervish, but despises him, and has not the slightest hesitation in attacking him, even when in superior numbers. This confidence in themselves and in their British officers is of enormous value in savage warfare. I concur in his (Colonel Kitchener's) recommendation of Captain H. A. Macdonald, Gordon Highlanders, and others who have ably commanded the battalions that have garrisoned Suakin during a harassing siege."

His services were recognised by the Khedive, who bestowed upon him the Order of Medjidieh. The

battles of Toski and Tokar presented him with further opportunities of distinguishing himself, and it was during this period of hard slogging work, in which he simply revelled, that he became known as "Fighting Mac."

At Toski he again led the Soudanese troops, and once more he gained his commander's warm encomiums. "I cannot speak too highly," wrote Sir Francis Grenfell in an official despatch, "of the conduct of all ranks in this action. The advance of the 11th Battalion (Captain Macdonald's) on the second Dervish position was well carried out, and the 1st and 2nd Egyptian Battalions, both on that occasion and earlier in the fight, showed the same eagerness as the Soudanese battalions to close with the enemy."

After Toski Macdonald was awarded the Distinguished Service Order, and Tokar brought still further honours in its train. In July, 1891, he was gazetted Major, receiving at the same time the third class of the Osmanieh. As major he was gazetted with the Royal Fusiliers, but during the next five years he was busy preparing his troops for the final advance on Khartoum. It will thus be seen that his advancement in the Soudan had been fairly rapid. Going out as a lieutenant, in seven years he was a major, while his honours embraced two stars, a medal, and three clasps.

His work during the next few years was not so much to his liking, but with his usual doggedness he stuck gamely to his task. The savage Soudanese had to be licked into shape, and this required patience,

resolution, and resource. A strict disciplinarian, his methods at times did not go down well with the blacks, and a number of his men plotted to mutiny and shoot him. Hector overheard the scheme, and promptly calling them together suggested that they should carry out their threat. They refused to take him at his word, saying that he did not seem to care whether he died or not. This story of his courage got about, and afterwards no white officer was more implicitly obeyed by the Soudanese troops than Macdonald Bey.

CHAPTER V.

In the Valley of the Nile—Atbara.

IN 1896, Sir H. (now Lord) Kitchener began his re-conquest of the Soudan, and he had with him Hector Macdonald as commander of the 2nd Infantry Brigade. Among the more important operations taken part in this year were the battle of Firket, the capture of Hafu, and the occupation of Dongola. Hector, as usual, played a conspicuous part, and his reward was a Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonelcy. The following year he accompanied the Egyptian Brigade up the Nile, being present at the action of Abu Hamed. In this engagement he handled his troops particularly well, and he was the first to occupy Berber. The column, on the average, marched fifteen and a half miles a day for fully eight days, and at the end the fighting, if short, was sharp. Macdonald was again honourably mentioned in despatches, and in addition two further clasps were added to his Egyptian medal.

The following year (1897) saw Kitchener begin his memorable march on Omdurman. The British Government had determined on the re-conquest of the Soudan, and British troops were hurried forward to join the army of the Sirdar. The strength of the Dervishes

was 60,000—40,000, with the Khalifa in command, were concentrated at Omdurman, the remainder under Osman Digna and Mahmond being at Metammeh. Opposed to this Kitchener had an army of 12,000 men—the strongest and best-equipped that had ever fought under the Egyptian standard in the Upper Nile. The Egyptian infantry division was under the command of General Sir Archibald Hunter, and he had with him Hector Macdonald, now a Brigadier-General. The British infantry battalions included were—1st Royal Warwickshires, 1st Lincolns, 1st Camerons, and 1st Seaforths. The little army was well supplied with artillery, and had in addition eight squadrons of Egyptian cavalry under General Broadwood.

The Sirdar's force was in time to prevent Mahmond's army from reaching Berber, and the Dervishes at once began to strengthen a position near the River Atbara. On the evening of April 7th, the Egyptian army marched out to give battle. The British infantry had the post of honour and danger on the left, but to Macdonald's blacks was entrusted the task of clearing the Dervish hordes out of thick scrub on the right.

"When the sun rose," writes G. W. Steevens in his book, 'With Kitchener to Khartoum,' "it revealed a stockade made up of timber and a ten-foot hedge of camel thorn with entrenchments behind—a formidable enough obstacle to face." In the attack on the right the Egyptian troops, led by their British officers, vied with the flower of the British infantry on the left. Not a man flinched from the encounter, and in forty minutes

the Dervish hordes had been driven out of their lair. Thousands of them lay dead on the field, and 4000, including Mahmond, were prisoners in the hands of Kitchener.

How the Egyptian troops, under Hunter, Lewis, and Hector Macdonald, behaved, is best told in the words of G. W. Steevens, the war correspondent—"All the right hand part of the zariba was alive with our blacks. They had been seen from the British line as it advanced ambling and scrambling over rise and dip, firing heavily, as they were ordered to, and then charging with the cold bayonet as they lusted to. They were in first, there cannot be a doubt. Their line formation turned out a far better one for charging the defences than the British columns, which were founded on an exaggerated expectation of the difficulty of the zariba. And if the zariba had been as high and thick as the Bank of England, the blacks and their brigaded Egyptians would have slicked through it and picked out the thorns after the cease fire. . . . But never think the blacks were out of hand. They attacked fast, but they attacked steadily, and kept their formation to the last moment there was anything to form against. The battle of the Atbara has definitely placed the blacks—yes, and the once condemned Egyptians—in the ranks of the very best troops in the world. When it was over their officers were ready to cry with joy and pride. And the blacks, every one of whom would beamingly charge the bottomless pit after his Bey, were just as joyous and proud of their officers."

This was Hector Macdonald's first action as a Brigadier, and he and his blacks had come out of the ordeal with flying colours. The black fellaheen had now been forged into a serviceable weapon; but the next fight was to see them tested and proved still further. At Omdurman, Macdonald and his Soudanese immortalised themselves.

CHAPTER VI.

Omdurman—A Brilliant Feat of Arms.

SEPTEMBER, 1898, brings us to the battle of Omdurman and the crowning point of Hector Macdonald's stirring career. The Sirdar, with his force strengthened by two brigades, had marched on Omdurman, the sacred city of Mahdism, and on 2nd September he was engaged with the Dervish Army, 60,000 strong. The enemy rushed on the British position, but they were met with such a torrent of shot and shell that none save fanatics could have faced. The slaughter was awful; thousands fell, but thousands still came on to meet their doom. The attack died away, and then began the British advance. The 21st Lancers slipped out and made straight for the Khalifa's capital; after them went the British and Egyptian Brigades.

Macdonald was outermost and rearmost, and it was now that the great chance of his life came. It was anticipated that all fighting was over, when suddenly from the rear burst out a roar of fire. Macdonald's Soudanese Brigade was one mass of flame. Ten thousand Dervishes were attacking his front, and another horde was hastening up to fall upon his rear.

"Fighting Mac." and his blacks were cut off from the main army, and the annihilation of the little band seemed only a question of minutes. As he prepared to stand his ground, he was ordered to retire, but he indignantly refused. He knew that to retreat from a mobile and resourceful enemy meant disaster. "Retreat," he exclaimed, excitedly; "I'll no' do it. I'll see them damned first. We maun just fight." And fight he did, as the Dervishes knew to their cost.

At last the Dervish tempest burst upon Macdonald. With one sudden movement twelve thousand warriors swept on three thousand trained black troops; the fiercest fight of the fierce day was now raging, and the handful of spectators on the Gurgham Hill waited to see the little force crumpled up. "It was the very crux and crisis of the fight," writes G. W. Steevens. "If Macdonald went, Lewis on his left, and Collinson and the supporting camel corps and the newly returned cavalry, all on his right and rear, must all go too.

"The Second British and Second Egyptian Brigades were far off by now. If they had to be recalled, the Khalifa could walk back into his stronghold, and then all our fighting was to begin anew. But Hunter Pasha was there, and Macdonald Bey was there, born fighting men both, whom no danger can flurry and no sudden shift in the kaleidoscope of battle disconcert. Hunter sent for Wauchope's first British Brigade to fill the gap between Macdonald and Lewis. The order went to General Gatacre first, instead of to the Sirdar; with the soldier's instinct he set the brigade moving on the

instant. The khaki columns faced round, and edged rightward till the fighting line was backed with 3000 Lee-Metfords, which no man on earth could face and live.

"But the cockpit of the fight was Macdonald's. The British might avenge his brigade; it was his to keep it and to kill off the attack. To meet it he turned his front through a complete half-circle, facing successively south, west, and north. Every tactician in the army was delirious in his praise; the ignorant correspondent was content to watch the man and his blacks. 'Cool as on parade,' is an old phrase. Macdonald Bey was very much cooler. Beneath the strong square-hewn face you could tell that the brain was working as if packed in ice. He sat solid on his horse, and bent his black brows towards the green flags and the Remingtons. Then he turned to a galloper with an order, and cantered easily up to a battalion commander. Magically the rifles hushed, the stinging powder-smoke wisped away, and the companies were rapidly threading backward and forward, round and round, in and out, as if it were a figure of a dance. In two minutes the brigade was together again in a new place. The field in front was hastening towards us in a whitey-brown cloud of dervishes. An order. Macdonald's jaws gripped and hardened as the flame spurted out again, and the whitey-brown cloud quivered and stood still. He saw everything; knew what to do; knew how to do it; did it. At the fire he was ever brooding watchfully behind the firing line; at the cease fire, he was

instantly in front of it; all saw him, and knew that they were being nursed to triumph.

"His blacks of the 9th, 10th, and 11th, the historic regiments of the Egyptian Army, were worthy of their chief. The 2nd Egyptian, brigaded with them, and fighting in line, were worthy of their comrades, and of their own reputation as the best-disciplined battalion in the world. A few had feared that the blacks would be too forward, the yellows too backward: there was no difference at all between them. The Egyptians sprang to the advance at the bugle; the Soudanese ceased fire in an instant silence at the whistle. They were losing men, too, for though eyes were clamped on the Dervish charges, the Dervish charge was brisk. Man after man dropped out behind the firing line. . . . The table of loss topped 100—150—neared 200. Still they stood, fired, advanced, fired, changed front, fired—firing, firing always, deaf in the din, blind in the smarting smoke, hot, dry, bleeding, bloodthirsty, enduring the devlish fight to the end."

Mr. Steevens was not alone in his praise of Hector Macdonald. Bennet Burleigh, the well-known war correspondent, tells the story thus:—"With a tact, coolness, and hardihood I have never seen equalled, Colonel Macdonald manœuvred and fought his men. They responded to his call with confidence and alacrity begotten of long acquaintance and implicit faith in their leader. He had led several of the battalions through a score of fierce fights and skirmishes, always emerging and covering himself and his men with glory,

honour, and victory. All of them knew him; they were proud of him. Unmistakably the Khalifa and his son, the Sheikh El Din, thought that their fortunate hour had come—that in detail they would destroy first Macdonald, then one by one the other Khedival brigades. What might have happened had both father and son arrived at the same time and distance on both sides of Macdonald, as was evidently intended, I will not venture to discuss. Happily, the onslaughts did not quite synchronise, and Macdonald was able to devote virtually his whole strength to the overthrow of the Khalifa's division before rapidly turning about first one, then another of his battalions to deal with the Sheikh El Din's unbroken columns. . . . Steady as a gladiator, with what to some of us looked like inevitable disaster staring him in the face, Macdonald fought his brigade for all it was worth. He moved quickly upon the best available ground, formed up, wheeled about, and stood to die or win. He won practically unaided."

The Dervish attack slackened, then fell off altogether; the cavalry swept over the field, and "the largest, best, and bravest army that ever fought against us for Mahdism" was no more. The Dervish bill of casualties was astounding. Over 11,000 were killed, 16,000 were wounded, and the prisoners numbered 4000. The British loss was trifling, the total casualties being 131 British, 256 native—387.

Hector Macdonald and his Soudanese troops carried off the honours of the fight, and by popular accord he

was dubbed "the hero of Omdurman." Bennet Burleigh holds that "had the brilliant, the splendid deed of arms wrought by Macdonald been done under the eyes of a sovereign, or in some other armies, he had surely been created a general on the spot. If the public are in search of the real hero of the battle of Omdurman, there he is ready made."

It was recognised that the fight was won by Macdonald's coolness and determination, by the consummate skill with which he manœuvred his black troops, and by the implicit confidence and trust that existed between leader and led. In his despatch Sir Herbert Kitchener wrote:—

"The manner in which the brigadiers handled their respective brigades, the thorough knowledge of their profession, and their proved skill in the field, mark them out, one and all, as fitted for higher rank, and I have great pleasure in submitting their names for favourable consideration:—Brigadier-Generals N. G. Lyttleton and A. G. Wauchope, Lieutenant-Colonels J. G. Maxwell, H. A. Macdonald, D. F. Lewis, and J. Collinson. Macdonald's brigade was highly tested, bearing the brunt of two severe attacks delivered at very short intervals from different directions, and I am sure it must be a source of the greatest satisfaction to Colonel Macdonald, as it is to myself and the whole Army, that the very great care he has for long devoted to the training of his brigade has proved so effectual, enabling his men to behave with the greatest steadiness under most trying circumstances, and

repelling most successfully two determined Dervish onslaughts."

It would be impossible to give all the tributes paid to Hector at this time. Soldiers and military writers alike waxed enthusiastic, but through all the praise he emerged as modest and unassuming as ever. The eulogium of the *St. James Gazette* was exceptionally warm, and on that account cannot be omitted.

"It is time to say very plainly," says the *St. James Gazette*, "that it is now quite certain . . . that there was a moment in the battle of Omdurman when our great victory was very nearly turned into a terrible disaster, and that there is one man who stands out, above Sirdar and all, as having been responsible for averting such an awful conclusion to what seemed at first a fairly straightforward engagement.

"That man was Colonel Macdonald, who commanded the Soudanese Brigade, and his great exploit . . . deserves a much more emphatic recognition than it has yet obtained from the British press and public. . . . So far as the fighting on that great day went, the honours lie with Macdonald. All credit to the Sirdar, the organiser of the victory. But on the battlefield itself even he must now be counted second to the gallant Scotsman who actually saved the day."

General Wauchope also put on record his appreciation of Macdonald's action. At a reception given to him at Niddrie Marischal on his return from Egypt, General Wauchope, speaking of Omdurman and of the men who had taken a leading part in that campaign,

said:—"There is another man I should like to mention. He is a Scotsman, General Macdonald, who led one of the Egyptian brigades. He got his chance, and he was able to take it; and certainly by his tactics, by his coolness, by his perception at the proper moment, he had a great deal to do with the success of the day."

Hector Macdonald's reputation as a leader was now firmly established, and honours fell on him "thick as leaves in Vallambrosa." He was made a Commander of the Bath, an aide-de-camp to Queen Victoria; he was promoted to be Brigadier-General, and was given a command in India. But it was not till the following spring that his fellow-countrymen got an opportunity of showing their gratitude to one who was now looked upon as a national hero. How he was fêted and honoured in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and his native Highlands will be told in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

Home Again—A Warm Welcome.

"FIGHTING MAC" reached London in May, 1899, to find himself a national hero. His triumphal march was inaugurated in the Hotel Cecil, on Saturday, May 6, the combined Highland Societies of the Metropolis, headed by the Duke of Atholl, meeting to do him honour. Hector, or, as he was then, Colonel Macdonald, was entertained at a banquet in the great hall, and during the evening he was presented with a sword of honour by the Duke of Atholl on behalf of the Highland Societies of London.

The banquet was attended by five hundred guests, among whom were the Earl of Dunmore, the Earl of Kincardine, Marquis of Tullibardine, Lord Strathcona, Lord Kingsburgh, Lord Borthwick, Lord Saltoun, Viscount Encombe, General Sir Evelyn Wood, Major-General Sir C. Ardagh, General Sir H. W. Norman, Major-General C. B. Knowles, C.B.; Sir James R. D. MacGregor, Bart.; General Sir William Olpherts, V.C.; Sir Donald Currie, The Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Colonel Frank Rhodes, and Lieutenant-Colonel Sandeman of Fonab.

Military uniforms and Highland dress gave a picturesque colour to the scene, and in many ways the

Highland character of the proceedings was indicated. Pipers summoned the guests to dinner, the boy pipers of the Caledonian Asylum made the round of the hall playing their pipes, and the haggis was borne in state under the escort of two stalwart pipers to the Duke of Atholl. The guest of the evening was welcomed with an enthusiasm that was thoroughly Celtic, and the enthusiasm was shared equally by the ladies, who watched the banquet from the gallery of the hall.

Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., in the course of the after-dinner speeches, said he had had the satisfaction of seeing Colonel Macdonald rise gradually from second-lieutenant to the position which he now held, and he was sure it would not be long before Colonel Macdonald went to a higher appointment still. Sir Evelyn mentioned that one of his sons had had the advantage of being trained under Colonel Macdonald, and added that he once asked his son if he ever had any difference with his commanding officer. His son replied only once. Then they both wanted to fight the same man.

To the Duke of Atholl fell the honour of proposing Hector's health. He said he did not know why he had been selected as chairman, but he had not refused that honour, partly because he was glad to have an opportunity of publicly testifying his admiration for the hero of Omdurman, and partly because he knew Colonel Macdonald was a personal friend of one who was very dear to himself, and who had served in the Egyptian Army in the last Soudan campaign. In referring to his Egyptian experiences, the Duke mentioned as an

instance of the devotion shown to Colonel Macdonald by his troops that at Omdurman his black orderly had told off eight men to stand by their commander. If Macdonald had not had his brigade in hand and handled them with such masterly skill Omdurman might not have been the success it was. The position which he occupied towards the close of the battle had been described as a cockpit, and that battle was mainly won by the good behaviour of the brigade under his command.

By his own exertion he had risen almost from the bottom rung of the ladder to his present high position. He was now Aide-de-Camp to the Queen, and his breast was covered with medals. Scotsmen were all proud of him, and by his gallantry he had reflected upon their country the greatest credit. Turning to Colonel Macdonald, the Duke continued—"On behalf of the Highland Associations of London and other friends, I present you with this sword. I know full well in your hands it will fare well. May you be spared long to wear this sword and win fresh decorations." When the presentation was made the entire company rose to their feet and cheered with the utmost enthusiasm.

Colonel Macdonald made a soldierly speech in reply. Addressing the gathering as "brother Highlanders," he said he was deeply conscious of the distinguished honour he had received that night owing to no merits of his own, but entirely because of the loyal services of the British officers, his superiors, and those who had served under him. He hoped the gratitude which he

felt for the warmth of his reception would not be measured by the words in which he was to return thanks.

He laid no claim to what the generosity of the chairman had been pleased to say about him. The Egyptian Army was a tender plant which required great care and intelligent nursing. General Sir Evelyn Wood, its first Sirdar, had a delicate task. His army was composed of Turks, Soudanese, and Egyptians, with British officers, and he welded them into one harmonious whole for a certain purpose—that was to fight. They had come that night to testify to the manner in which that had been carried out. After praising the present constitution of the Egyptian army, Colonel Macdonald said the wisdom and foresight of the Sirdar were shown in the operations at Omdurman by his placing three batteries of artillery under his command as he moved in towards Omdurman with a view to getting inside the fortifications before the Dervishes arrived there. The brigade entrusted to his care was not assailed by the Dervish army. He brought up the three batteries placed under his command, and with these he assailed the Dervishes. The infantry, meantime, were deployed in line with rifles at rest ready to open fire when the Dervishes were within range. It was thus the first attack was destroyed. His object in dwelling on that point was that he did not think sufficient credit had been given to the artillery. It was the handling and due appreciation of all arms of the service that generally brought victory.

By a happy accident an announcement of further promotion for Macdonald was made on the morning of the banquet, and this recognition of their hero tended to still further gladden the hearts of the Highlanders present. His new appointment was the command of the Sirhind district of India, a reward that was substantial in nature and full of possibilities.

CHAPTER VIII.

Feted in Glasgow—a Series of Brilliant Functions.

FROM London Hector Macdonald went to Glasgow, and here he received another enthusiastic greeting. He met the city magnates, his old comrades of the Gordon Highlanders' Society, and, last of all, his fellow clansmen, the Macdonalds. They filled the spacious St. Andrew's Hall, resplendent in hundreds of kilts and tunics; fair ladies fluttered handkerchiefs from balconies and area, and, when the bagpipes had finished their welcome, joined in a rousing cheer, which seemed to stir with delight the well-controlled feelings of the warrior guest. It was a great night for the Macdonalds, and the Right Hon. J. A. Macdonald, Lord Justice Clerk (Lord Kingsburgh), who presided, did not attempt to minimise the importance of the clan.

It was not easy, said he, to speak of the Macdonalds without being boastful. The hero of the night was a man worthy of all honour, of outstanding capacity, undaunted courage, and had before him the highest gifts his profession could bestow. But the Macdonalds had given other great men to the State and world.

He instanced the case of the son of another crofter, who, for his loyalty to Prince Charlie and the Jacobite cause, had to flee to France, and whose son became Napoleon's famous Marshal Macdonald, the Duke of Tarentum, the hero of Wagram, and one of the most brilliant soldiers of his time. The Soudan explorer, the Premier of Canada, the diplomat in China, were other Macdonalds who were doing great service for their country, and any other chairman would have been compelled to class among other great Macdonalds the speaker himself, who combines with the learning of a great lawyer the strategical capacity of a great soldier.

Lord Kingsburgh made a happy hit when, in handing over the Clan Macdonald sword of honour, he explained it was a claymore, and would not suit his present uniform, but the time would come when he could wear it—perhaps as Colonel-in-Chief of the Gordon Highlanders! This prediction was received with vociferous cheering, which was renewed when, in the course of his reply, Colonel Macdonald spoke of the strong incentive to duty given him by his Colonel when he was to be promoted from corporal to sergeant. "Remember," said the Colonel, "the rank of sergeant in the Gordon Highlanders is equal to the rank of a member of Parliament for the Kingdom." And the Colonel added he had always endeavoured to live up to that faith.

Another happy point was made by Macdonald of Glenaladale when he told the hero that the case in which the Macdonalds' illuminated address was

contained was the specific gift of the ladies of the clan, and the magnificent art work which decorated the parchment was the work of a lady, also of the clan.

A fitting close to the proceedings was given when Bennet Burleigh, the famous war correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," responded to a call for a speech, and in thrilling accents gave a picture of Macdonald in action as he had seen him at Omdurman, when surrounded by brave and savage warriors, in a position from which no man expected him to emerge alive. There he sat on horseback issuing orders, grim, calm, resolute, a man who stood to conquer or die, whose magnificant courage and his inspiration of confidence and courage in those under him enabled him—though he might deny it himself—to prove the real victor of Omdurman.

It is fitting that the address presented to him by the Clan Macdonald, on behalf of the Macdonalds in every part of the world, should be given here:—

"To Colonel H. A. Macdonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C. to the Queen, and Brigadier-General in the Egyptian Army.

"We, the members of the Macdonald Society, desire to offer you our warmest congratulations on the occasion of your return to Scotland after a long period of active and brilliant service in Afghanistan, India, and Africa, in all of which you have so signally distinguished yourself, as at Karatiga and Sharasiah, in the long and memorable march to Kandahar, in the Transvaal, and more recently in the victory of Omdurman, in which the brilliant feat of arms, under most difficult circumstances, and the great personal bravery displayed by you called forth the admiration of the whole world.

"We have followed with the deepest interest and pride each successive step in your career, and we have been specially gratified that, by universal consent, a very high tribute of praise should have been accorded to you for your conspicuous bravery as a soldier, and your eminent skill as a general, in recognition of which your clansfolk desire to hand you a sword of honour, which they hope you will accept as evidence of the pride and satisfaction with which they view your achievements.

"That you may be long spared to devote your brilliant talents to the service of your Queen and country, and that you may continue to merit and receive the highest honours attainable in your profession, is the earnest and sincere wish of your devoted clansmen and friends."

The principal signatories on behalf of the Clan Macdonald were Clanranald, Chief of the Society, and Lord Kingsburgh, President.

Hector's speeches at the various functions were characteristically brief and always full of soldierly modesty. At the informal reception held in the Central Hotel at eight o'clock on the morning of his arrival in Glasgow his health was pledged by the distinguished party that had assembled at the station to give him welcome. He acknowledged the cordiality of the reception, and returned his heartfelt thanks for the honour they had done him. Then, with a humorous glance round the company, he said he had always heard that Glasgow was a great city. He could quite understand the reason for that now when its citizens could start drinking toasts at that hour of the morning —a sally which caused great merriment.

At the Corporation luncheon Macdonald made a longer speech than usual. Replying to the toast of his

health, he said any success he had attained was entirely due to the sympathy, the encouragement, and the kindness of the officers under whom he served when he was a boy. Regarding Omdurman—but for which action, he presumed, he should not have had the great pleasure of being the guest of Glasgow Corporation—the Sirdar placed such confidence in his subordinate commanders that he left them to do their duty according to their lights, while he set forth to do the higher duty still of preventing the Dervish army entering the fortifications they so foolishly left. It was thus that the opportunity was given to the brigade entrusted to his care to wipe them out by detachments.

The fire discipline of the brigade enabled it to keep the enemy at a distance from them. The fire of the enemy was not very great, but their numbers were, and had it not been for the high training the Egyptians received for many years in fire discipline and musketry from their British officers they would not have been able to fight as they had done. They also learned a lesson from the volunteers. Colonel Macdonald concluded by proposing the health of the Lord Provost and Magistrates.

It was well known, he said, that Glasgow was the second city in the Empire, and it was said that it would be the first city were it not that there were pleasant trips for the Corporation to London. He asked them to take care they did not lose the Magistrates who were enabled to borrow money at a cheaper rate than any other town in the country.

He was present also at a smoking concert of the Gordon Highlanders' Association, and in the course of the evening delivered a short address. In his younger days, he said, he presumed he had served in the ranks with most of those present, and he was sure they could all testify to the kindness and consideration shown them by their officers, and as a rule by the non-commissioned officers. There was no bullying; they were treated with every sympathy. It was to the training he then received that he attributed his subsequent success. He could not better testify his feeling towards his old regiment than by saying that he carried their regimental system into the Egyptian Army in the battalion he commanded for seven years and the brigade he had under his charge for three years.

Here is a pen portrait of Hector by one who was present at the Clan Macdonald reception in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow:—"I was quite close to the hero of the evening, and have to confess that all portraits I have seen of him have been deceiving. I had got the impression that he was a man of the dour, dogged, heavy type. He is the opposite, slightly built, under the medium height, with dark hair, and his face only beginning to show the lines of discipline. His manner is alert, eager, sometimes almost restless; his eyes are keen and penetrating, and many changing expressions chase each other across the face, each, however, marking and punctuating a mood. A slight, wiry man of the Wolseley and Roberts type, but you discover strength and power the moment your eyes rest

Reproduction of Presentation Address and Sword of Honour by County of Ross and Cromarty.

on the heavy under jaw and watch the way in which it ever and anon presses upwards and gives to the firm mouth the suggestion of immense and ready resolution, a resolution which, by the way, has been tested in a series of conflicts from the Hazardarakht defile to Omdurman. But we looked in vain for one twitch of nervousness. When he chose to be reposeful he was impenetrable as the sphinx.

Bennet Burleigh's speech on this occasion electrified the audience. The meeting was over; the courtesies had passed. "For he's a jolly good fellow" had been sung in rousing chorus, and everyone was ready to go when a loud shout arose for "Burleigh, Burleigh," a demand that Bennet Burleigh, the war correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, who sat on the platform, should give them a speech. At the call of Lord Kingsburgh he responded, and then the really thrilling episode of the meeting occurred. In resounding words, almost passionate in their eloquence, Burleigh referred to Omdurman.

He repeated his own version of the battle. Turning to Macdonald, he said, "I have seen him in straits from which no man could have expected him to emerge alive. I have seen him face to face with tens of thousands of the most daring warriors that ever faced shot or steel, and there he sat calm, collected, immovable, the bravest of them all. Officers and men knew that in the crisis there was but one man to trust their safety, and that man Hector Macdonald. I saw him conquer. I saw him win in the truest sense, although

he will deny it himself, the battle of Omdurman. There is the real man; the real hero."

From Glasgow Macdonald went northwards, and in our next chapter we shall relate how his native county welcomed him home.

CHAPTER IX.

In the Highlands—Demonstrations and Honours.

THE Highland people, who are proverbially warm-hearted, left nothing undone to make Macdonald's home-coming a memorable one. His countrymen came forward shoulder to shoulder to pay their respect and admiration with a spontaneity and unanimity which were truly unique. For cordiality and enthusiasm nothing could have surpassed the demonstrations at Dingwall, Invergordon, Tain, and Inverness. The demonstrations of welcome began at Dingwall, and Ross-shire did certainly rise to the occasion. The reception accorded to the Omdurman hero was magnificent.

The proceedings were dignified and well-ordered, befitting in all respects the importance of Dingwall as the capital of the Colonel's native county. The day was generally observed as a holiday in the burgh and district, and the streets were filled by thousands of people of all classes, whose one single desire seemed to be to get a glimpse of the face and figure of the brave Ross-shire Brigadier-General. The town was transformed into a perfect fairyland with emblems of gaiety, and it is said the High Street never before looked so picturesque. The ceremony in the Station Square was

a complete success. The enthusiasm of the public and their deep interest in Colonel Macdonald's wonderful career found substantial expression in the presentation of an illuminated address in a silver case, and a splendid sword of honour given by the County of Ross and Cromarty; and of the freedom of the burgh given by the Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Dingwall.

The county gifts were handed over to the Colonel by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart., Convener and Lord-Lieutenant of the County, in a speech conceived in admirable good taste, and breathing a fine, warm Highland sentiment, which was most cordially reciprocated by the immense assemblage which surrounded the platform. Provost Stewart was equally felicitous in his remarks in presenting the freedom of the burgh. In face of the huge demonstration the gallant officer bore himself well. His replies to the addresses were brief and modest. He thanked them all, with a full heart, over and over again, and modestly remarked that he claimed no other credit than that of endeavouring to the best of his ability to do his duty in whatever circumstances he was placed. The banquet which followed was thoroughly representative of the town and county.

The inhabitants of Invergordon were not one whit behind their neighbours in their endeavour to honour their fellow-countryman, and their reception to the Colonel partook of all the characteristics of a good Highland welcome.

Continuing his triumphal march, Macdonald visited Tain, and here excitement and enthusiasm stirred the ancient and Royal town to its very centre. The great event was observed as a half-holiday in the town and district, and altogether Tain's enthusiasm was creditable to, as well as characteristic of, that enterprising community. The hero's visit, too, was not without incident. Just as he stepped off the train he fell, so to speak, into the arms of an old schoolfellow. Provost Fowler had looked forward to that day with peculiar interest, and his meeting with the gallant officer was most affectionate. Before leaving the station the Colonel was also introduced to an old soldier named John Macangus, Milton of Cadboll, Fearn, who was along with him at Kandahar, Kabul, &c. A guard of honour of the 1st Battalion Seaforth Highlanders was at the station, and the march up town was most imposing. The streets were lined with interested sight-seers, and the bells of the Old Tower rung out merry peals. The pipers and the guard of honour preceded the procession from the station to the Town Hall, where the presentation of an address was made. On the platform were Captain and Mrs. Macleod; Rev. James Macdonald, Dornoch; Councillor W. M'Donald, Provost and Magistrates of Tain, and others. Provost Fowler, in presenting the address, said they were met to do honour to the man whose heroism was already part of the glorious history of the British Army, and whose name was known throughout the whole civilised world. The career of Colonel Macdonald had called

forth universal admiration. In no part of the world were his heroic deeds and skilful leadership more admired than in his native Highlands. The Provost thereafter referred to the Colonel's military career, and concluded by remarking that he had himself with peculiar pleasure followed the Colonel's career as one who knew him long ago when they were lads together.

At that early time, he said, he could well remember noticing the marks of future greatness in the young lad who had now become the hero and the leader of whom they were all so proud.

Macdonald, who was rapturously received, accepted the kind address with feelings of gratitude, but he could not conceive why soldiers were not permitted to do their duty as others in different walks of life without being feted as he had been. Yet he had many qualms of conscience when he accepted the kind invitation of his old comrade, Provost Fowler, but on due consideration he thought that perhaps he would be an agent in the way of getting a few recruits for the army. Their country would be repaid for the sacrifice they had made on his behalf if some of the young boys present would go and do likewise. The proceedings thereafter terminated, and the company adjourned to the banquet, which was held in the Royal Hotel. Provost Fowler proposed "Our Gallant Guest." He stated his gallant services would be recorded, and would be a lesson to young men of the day and generations unborn. Colonel Macdonald briefly replied, remarking he heard with pleasure the sensible

words of Captain Fraser that all the young men who did not join the navy and army should join the volunteers.

The gathering proved one of the most enthusiastic which the distinguished soldier addressed in the North. The address of welcome expressed the interest which the people of Tain have taken in the Colonel's career, and their sense of the honour which his heroic deeds have reflected upon his native county of Ross.

CHAPTER X.

Honoured in Inverness and the Black Isle.

THE great "gathering of the clans," however, was at Inverness. This much was naturally expected from the capital of the Highlands, and the Invernessians in honouring Macdonald as they did honoured themselves. The demonstration testified in no uncertain manner the universal popularity of the gallant soldier. The outburst of enthusiasm for the guest was an impressive spectacle, in which patriotism and personal admiration were happily mixed together. The Colonel, it must be remembered, spent his early days as an apprentice draper in a large drapery establishment in town, and was for upwards of a year a member of the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Cameron Highlanders. Therefore, it was only natural that the inhabitants should turn out to do honour to one whom they partly claimed as their own.

The presentation of the address of welcome took place in front of the Town Hall, just within 20 yards of the Clan Tartan Warehouse, where he served his apprenticeship, and, as the Colonel stood to receive the address of the community, his feelings must have reverted to his career as a youth in the Highland capital, and the

unique and active life he had led since he quitted the unromantic business life behind the counter for the stirring and martial life of the soldier.

One or two incidents of the demonstration might be mentioned. The Colonel was led to the platform by Provost Macbean, and introduced to the members of the Corporation and their lady relatives, a large number of other ladies and gentlemen sharing the honour of the presentation. One of the party was Mrs. Macdonald, Ardochy, an aunt of the Brigadier-General, who had not seen him since his return to Britain. The meeting appeared to be a pleasant surprise for General Macdonald, who put his arm about his old and esteemed relative and kissed her—a gallant action which charmed those who witnessed it, the ladies particularly.

The Colonel's frank and genial recognition of a few of his friends of his early days was characteristic. While the procession to the Town Hall was making its way along Inglis Street, the Colonel recognised an old soldier who was one of the men wounded on the ill-fated Majuba Hill. He also shook hands with a postman from the Black Isle who was with him on the march to Kandahar. His old sergeant-instructor, Sergeant-Major Pocock, who has had distinguished service in the Indian Mutiny, was among those present at the ceremony. The gallant Colonel had a friendly chat with the Sergeant-Major, and in his speech at the banquet, in proposing the toast of the Inverness Rifle Volunteers, he testified to the high admiration he entertained for him.

"Perhaps," said Macdonald, "there is more due to him, or rather I owe more to him than any of you can understand. Late and early this most deserving non-commissioned officer attended to his duties. He was always there to instruct, to teach, to sympathise; and, as to this word 'sympathy,' there is no question that if you touch the hearts of those under you, you will be repaid tenfold."

The address presented to Macdonald by the community of Inverness was in the following terms:—

To Colonel Hector A. Macdonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C.,
Brigadier-General in the Egyptian Army.

Sir,

The Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Inverness, for themselves and on behalf of the whole citizens of the Highland capital, accord you a hearty welcome on your return to your native land.

At an early period of your military career your distinguished services arrested the attention of your countrymen; and, promising as they did that brilliant reputation which achievements of later years have so fully earned, every step in your onward progress has been watched with affectionate and ever-growing interest by your fellow-Highlanders, and by none with deeper interest than the people of Inverness, among whom you first bore arms.

We learned with pride of your brilliant services in Afghanistan, in the Nazardarakht defile, and at Charasia, and afterwards in the victory which so fittingly crowned the memorable march from Cabul to Khandahar. Your subsequent services, especially in the Soudan, are part of the history of our country, and we need only add our tribute to the acclamation with which Britons all over the Empire received the tidings of that brilliant feat of arms by which the battle of Omdurman was saved.

The military genius, the soldierly qualities, and the personal bravery which have earned you such distinction in the past will, we doubt not, lead to still further distinction in the future ; and in now welcoming you home we look forward to a future home-coming and welcome, when, with higher rank and added honours won in your country's service, you return to spend the soldier's well-earned repose in your native Highlands.

Signed, in name and on behalf of the Provost, Magistrates, Town Council, and community of Inverness, by

WILLIAM MACBEAN, Provost.
KENNETH MACDONALD, Town Clerk.

Inverness, 13th May, 1899.

Macdonald, in reply, created some amusement by remarking he could not claim that he belonged to every county in Scotland, like the late Mr. Gladstone, and was rapturously cheered when he added that he could claim that much, that his mother had been an Inverness woman, and that he felt proud that they had asked him to come there that day as a half-Inverness-shire man.

Not the least interesting function, and that which brought his visit to the Highlands to a close, was the one which took place on the top of Mulbuie. It took the form of the presentation of an address of welcome from the residenters in his native parish. The ceremony took place at Mulbuie Old School, on Allangrange Muir. The greatest enthusiasm was manifested in the proceedings throughout the whole district, and, though there were no guards of honour or other of the special features which had marked the Colonel's visit to the

other towns which fêted him, nevertheless the respect and admiration of his fellow-islemen found expression in their own hearty and unmistakable way. Mulbuie is a crofting district, and on many of the thatched cottages flags and bannerettes waved from the chimneys. The weather was miserably wet, and it was all the more creditable to the residenters that they turned out in such large numbers.

The Colonel was met on the road by a crowd of people, who surrounded his carriage, and endeavoured to get a shake of the hero's hand. The carriage was preceded by a piper, and on its arrival at the school rockets were fired, and cheers were lustily raised. Colonel Macdonald seemed to feel quite "at home," and chatted in a pleasant and jocular fashion with a number of old friends. A temporary platform was erected in the open air, and, as the Colonel stood upon it, he was within a couple of yards of the old thatched school where he received his early education, and could also see, 400 yards away, the cottage of his birth. Standing in front of him were many of his former school companions and neighbours, so that the whole situation must have been of exceptional interest to him, and have recalled fond reminiscences of his earlier days.

And there were elements in the demonstration which must have impressed Hector. The chairman of the presentation ceremony was Mr. Forbes, Marybank, an old schoolfellow of the Colonel's, having sat at the same desk in Mulbuie School, learned the same lessons, and fought the same battles in the fields round about the

old building; and the speakers included Mr. Maclennan, schoolmaster, and Mr. Alexander Treasurer, Inverness, the Colonel's old schoolmaster. This was Mr. Treasurer's first meeting with the Colonel since his return to Britain, and the handshake was most hearty. Despite the inclement weather, the Mulbuie demonstration was decidedly enthusiastic, and, in the words of the old woman who was present, "It's rale nice, and quite true that the Colonel cudna find warmer hearts than on the top o' Mulbuie."

The address he received from the residenters of his native parish was couched as follows:—

To Brigadier-General Macdonald, C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C. to the Queen.

We, your friends, well-wishers, and fellow-countrymen of the Mulbuie district and the Black Isle, sincerely offer you our warmest congratulations on this the occasion of your again visiting your native parish. We desire to express our high admiration for you as a soldier, as well as for your friends amongst us with whom you are connected. We are especially gratified that a very high tribute of praise has been, by universal acclamation, rendered to you for your conspicuous bravery throughout the recent victorious Soudan campaign, and more especially for the eminent skill displayed by you as a leader at Atbara and Omdurman, and thus contributing in no small degree to the high honour universally reflected on the Anglo-Egyptian Army and its leaders. Each successive step in your brilliant career has been regarded with the deepest interest by all of us, and it ever will be our greatest pleasure to see you continue to merit the highest honours attainable in your noble service to the Queen and the country, and that, in the advancement of civilisation, the overthrow of tyranny and oppression, the building up

and maintaining of the prosperity of our vast British Empire, your name may ever be gratefully remembered. In name and on behalf of the Committee.

JOHN MACDONALD; WILLIAM MACLENNAN, F.E.I.S.; ANGUS FORBES, WILLIAM MACLENNAN, DONALD MACLENNAN, JOHN MACKENZIE, WILLIAM FORBES, DONALD MACKENZIE, ALEXANDER K. BEATON.

12th May, 1899.

CHAPTER XI.

In the Granite City—Honour from Glasgow University.

ABERDEEN, as the headquarters of the Gordons, naturally took a warm interest in Macdonald, and his visit to the Granite City after a lapse of thirty years was made the occasion of great demonstrations. His first visit to Aberdeen was as a newly-joined recruit, when in the company of a non. com. of the Ninety-Second he was introduced to Castlehill Barracks. During the course of his stay in the city he paid a visit to the Barracks, and as he stepped briskly into the old familiar square his bronzed face beamed as he recalled reminiscences of the past.

Entering the officers' quarters, he was received by Lieutenant-Colonel Macbean, Captain Gardyne, Lieutenant Allen, Adjutant; and Lieutenant Marshall. Between thirty and forty recruits were on parade, and the Colonel inspected a squad which was being drafted to Edinburgh to join the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders. Addressing the men, he said he hoped every one of them would turn out a good soldier. It might be expected that he should give them a few words of encouragement, and he would say to them, "Be sober, respectful, and obedient, always remembering

the good name of their regiment rather than themselves and such conduct would bring its reward."

Hector then conversed for some time with a number of the veterans, several of whom were old fighting comrades, and with Major Gordon and Captain Ross, formerly Quartermaster at the depot. In the course of conversation with a veteran who was a recruit at Castlehill at the same time as Colonel Macdonald, the Colonel said—"We had not a splendid shed like this to drill in. We had to drill outside in all sorts of weather." This part of his visit afforded him the greatest pleasure, and, like a happy schoolboy, he mingled and talked with his old comrades. Many battles were fought over again in the course of that brief stay in Castlehill Barracks.

In the afternoon of the same day the elite of Aberdeen assembled in the town and County Hall to show their appreciation of his brave deeds. The company was a distinguished one, including Lord Provost Fleming, the Marquis of Huntly, Sir John F. Clark of Tillypronie, Sir Arthur Grant, Monymusk; and Sir William Henderson.

The Marquis of Huntly, Chief of the Aberdeen Highland Association, presented to Colonel Macdonald an address offering hearty congratulations on the occasion of his return to Aberdeen after a long period of active and brilliant service in Afghanistan, India, and Africa, in all which he had so signally distinguished himself, and more recently at Omdurman, where his brilliant feat of arms, strategical proficiency, and great personal bravery called forth the admiration of the world.

They had been specially gratified that by universal consent the very highest tribute of praise should have been accorded him for his conspicuous bravery as a soldier and his eminent skill as a general, in recognition of which the Highlanders resident in Aberdeen, the home of the Gordons, and his birthplace as a soldier of the regular army, desired to hand him the address, in the hope that he would accept it as an evidence of the pride and satisfaction with which they viewed his achievements.

The address was signed by Lord Huntly, Chief of the Association; John M'Kenzie, president; and Hugh Macdonald, hon. secretary.

In a modest reply Hector said it was a great gratification to find that Highlanders, wherever they were, were never slow to express their appreciation of any one, however humble, who endeavoured to do his duty.

"I claim no merit for myself," he said, "but I claim that whatever success I have attained is entirely due to the training I received from my officers when I joined the 92nd Gordon Highlanders. They always entered into all the sports and pastimes of the young recruits, and not only did they do that, but even in the school-room they attended to see that they were taught those things they should know, so as to enable them to become good soldiers. Even in those far-off days there was the greatest consideration paid to new recruits.

"I have seen a tale about myself that I tramped from Inverness to Glasgow, and there enlisted. I wish to correct that statement. I enlisted in Inverness, and I

was there placed in a railway carriage, and given the most minute instructions as to how I was to proceed when I arrived in Aberdeen. On arrival in Aberdeen I was met by a non-commissioned officer of the 92nd, and conducted to the Castlehill barracks; and, I say, from the commanding officer to the smallest drummer boy, I was treated with the utmost kindness and consideration. Everything possible was done for me. I was shown what to do, and how to do it, and from then until now I have never forgotten how much I owe to my old regiment."

At the summer graduation ceremony of Glasgow University in the same year Hector received the honorary degree of LL.D. In conferring the degree upon Macdonald, Principal Story paid him a warm tribute, enumerating the outstanding points in his career, and congratulating him upon his devotion to duty and the services he had rendered his Queen and country. He had done much, he said, by his bravery and leadership to effect the utter rout of the army of the Khalifa, and during his long service in the Soudan Colonel Macdonald played the double part of military trainer and educator of the fellaheen.

Hector, who was dressed in his military uniform, with a loose black cloak thrown over his shoulders, was warmly gratified at the enthusiastic reception he received. The organ pealed out "Soldiers of the Queen," and the students, in characteristic fashion, did honour to the national hero.

Edinburgh also paid its respects to the national

hero, and then the period of feting over, he sailed for India to take up his duties as officer commanding the Sirhind district. Before leaving Scotland he asked Dingwall Town Council to accept of several Omdurman relics. The articles consisted of three Dervish war drums, a flag, coat of mail, helmet, and a Dervish soldier's coat, all of which belonged to the Khalifa's body-guard. His portrait, painted to the order of Miss Yule, Tarradale House, Muir of Ord, was also presented to the Town Council of Dingwall.

Of his appearance at this time, a newspaper correspondent wrote :—

"Macdonald is of middle height, with a short neck, and is very broad, but stands alert and erect. His character may be read in his strong, square face, with the dark, unflinching eye, the short, thick moustache, the very strong jaw. It is the face of a man of iron, although his laugh is as boyish as it was when he herded a cow or two in the Black Isle."

CHAPTER XII.

The Boer War—Commands the Highland Brigade—Koodoosberg and Paardeberg.

FOR the second time in his life, Hector Macdonald was on his way to India. Thirty years previously he sailed for the land of the Rajahs as a recruit; now he was going out decked with medals and honours to command the district in which many a time he had done "sentry-go." But Hector's stay in India was destined to be short. Already war clouds were forming in South Africa, and every day brought nearer the conflict between Briton and Boer.

The storm broke at last. On October 9, 1899, the Transvaal Government issued their ultimatum to Britain, and forty-eight hours later this country and the two South African Republics were merged in war. The hymn-singing farmer of the veldt proved himself a worthy antagonist, and for a time things went none too well with the British arms. Sir George White and a large army were shut up in Ladysmith; Kimberley and Mafeking were besieged; at Magersfontein Cronje disputed the path with Methuen's force; and at Colenso Buller was preparing for a great assault on the Boers on the Tugela heights.

Then came that dark week in December when at

Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso Britain's pride was humbled, and many of Britain's bravest and best laid low. At Magersfontein the Highland Brigade, with Major-General Wauchope at its head, was almost annihilated: a night march, a flashing lantern, a blaze of musketry, and down dropped the Highlanders like swathes of corn before the reaper. Brave "Andy" Wauchope was among the first to fall. He died where he would have wished to die, at the head of his men, and with his face to the foe. The attack failed, and broken and crumpled the Highland Brigade returned to its camp on the Modder River.

A leader was wanted for the Highland Brigade, and from far-off India Hector Macdonald was called to succeed Wauchope. In Scotland the news of Hector's selection was received with acclamation. No appointment could have been more popular, and they looked to him to win back the Highlanders' lost confidence. One day towards the end of January he arrived at the Modder, and the Highland Brigade turned out to welcome the new Brigadier; and this was probably the proudest moment of his career. His command was the flower of the British infantry—the 2nd Black Watch, the 2nd Seaforths, 1st Highland Light Infantry, and the 1st Gordons—the heroes of Dargai. The Highlanders' *morale* had been shaken by their terrible experiences on that night march to Magersfontein, and it was contemplated that it would take months before they would recover.

But here again Hector was the right man in the

right place. His arrival acted on the Brigade like a tonic. He "picked them up and shook them together" as only a great soldier could, and in a few days the sullen and dispirited Highlanders were themselves again. Lord Roberts was now in command of the British forces, with Lord Kitchener as chief of his staff. For weeks they had been perfecting their plans, and to Hector Macdonald and his Highland Brigade fell the honour of setting in motion the machinery that was to result in the relief of Kimberley and the capture of Cronje.

With the object of misleading the enemy, a demonstration was made by Macdonald on Cronje's right flank. His force consisted of the Highland Brigade—the Black Watch, the Argyll and Sutherlands, the H.L.I., and the Seaforths—two squadrons of the 9th Lancers, and the 62nd Battery; and on the 3rd February he left the Modder Camp for Koodoosberg Drift, an important crossing on the Modder River. Macdonald seized the drift, and next morning began to erect a redoubt on the northern bank of the river. The Boers meanwhile had occupied in strength Koodoosberg kopje, from which they shelled the breastworks. The enemy made a determined effort to drive the Highlanders from their position, and throughout the day the fighting was carried on at long range.

As the numbers of the Boers began to increase, Macdonald asked for reinforcements to be sent him; he also saw a chance of surrounding the Boer force, but as it turned out his request for a mounted force arrived at

a bad time. On the morning of the 7th Major-General Babington, with 19th Lancers and two battalions of horse artillery, left the Modder for Koodoosberg, but by the time the reinforcements arrived the Boers had, like the Arabs, folded their tents and stolen softly away. Macdonald's coup failed through no fault of his, and the conclusion of the action was very tame. The same evening he received orders to return to the Modder; in diverting the Boers' attention from their left flank he had successfully accomplished the object of his expedition. Macdonald lost over 50 men during the fighting, among them being Lieutenant F. G. Tait (Black Watch), the famous amateur golfer.

At the Modder camp Lord Roberts spoke a few words to the Highland Brigade. There would be plenty of fighting and marching for those who liked it, he assured them, and he looked to the Highland Brigade, under General Macdonald, to act up to its noblest traditions.

Owing to the extreme mobility of the Boers, the British infantry was at a disadvantage; and, as a consequence, the Highlanders did more marching than fighting. It was march, march, march, while the mounted men in front were doing the fighting. This sort of work was neither to the liking of Hector Macdonald nor his men. but there was still fighting in store for the Highlanders. At Paardeberg, Cronje, the old Transvaal lion, was corralled. Vacating his position at Magersfontein, he had made a wild dash for Bloemfontein, but the British columns were at his heels, and as he stood at bay, the khaki ring closed in until he was completely surrounded.

The circuit was completed by Macdonald and his Highland Brigade, who had marched thirty miles to take a hand in the game.

Lord Kitchener, who was in command, ordered a grand assault on the Boer position. "The Highland Brigade," writes an eye-witness, "was ordered to advance and clear the river bank of the enemy. Their front extended on the right across the river to some low-lying kopjes. The right had to wheel round straight on the river, whilst the left and centre had to clear the river bed. This manœuvre was disastrous. The Boers allowed our men to get well within 1000 yards, and then shot them down. There was no cover, no rocks, or friendly ant-heaps, not even tufts of grass, behind which our men could escape observation. There was only the open veldt, as devoid of cover as the palm of one's hand, and as flat as a turnpike road in England. At the first fusilade our men faltered and fell back a short distance, then quickly realising what was expected of them, down they went flat on their stomachs, and with the help of their bayonets, soon contrived to throw up sufficient earth to afford them some protection. Under a withering fire they remained in this position the whole day, firing volleys into the river banks, and thus keeping the enemy's fire down."

The behaviour of Macdonald's men through that trying day was described on all hands as magnificent. They lost heavily, but they never flinched. Hector himself was wounded in the foot by a Mauser bullet, and his horse was killed beside him as the wound was

Macdonald as Major-General.

being dressed. Despite his wound, however, he refused to retire, and stayed with his brigade until night. Lord Roberts' arrival put an end to the infantry attack. Too many lives had already been lost without any tangible result, and next morning saw all the available British artillery pumping lead into the Boer laagers. On February 27th—Majuba Day—Cronje threw up the sponge, and to Macdonald probably more than anyone else there came satisfaction that the dark stain that had blotted Britain's fair name so long was now wiped out.

In his official despatch, General Colville said that "the courage and determination shown by the Highland Brigade in their advance over some 1500 yards of perfectly open plain and their passage of the river, both under heavy fire, are beyond all praise." Hector himself was equally well pleased with his men. To a friend in Glasgow on February 27th he wrote as follows:—"To-day is the anniversary of Majuba. This morning Cronje and his army surrendered unconditionally after a night attack by the Canadians and the Gordon Highlanders. So let it be. On Sunday, the 18th, Cronje was completely 'boxed,' my poor brigade suffering heavily in the closing of it. On Monday, the 19th, we could have done the trick. We are all well pleased at the event, and so, I am sure, you will be at home. We are sadly in need of officers and of men. In the Highland Brigade we have left fit for work 24 officers and about 1600 men out of 87 officers and over 3000 men. Such is war. You will, I am sure, be pleased to learn, after the aspersions cast on the

brigade after Magersfontein, that I am perfectly satisfied with the work done by them, now in action twice under my eyes—work which perhaps none but themselves would have done half so creditably."

A fortnight later, "by the grace of God, and by the bravery of Her Majesty's soldiers," the British army entered Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State. Hector had not recovered from his wound, but he was on duty a week afterwards.

Macdonald was cheered during his enforced withdrawal from the field by receiving two telegrams from Queen Victoria. Her Majesty expressed her deepest sympathy with the gallant soldier, and hoped that the wound was not of a serious character. Some time later he received a second message congratulating him on his recovery.

Writing to a friend on March 10, he said, "I am not able to walk yet, but I hope to be able to do so in a month or two. The bullet entered the outside of my left foot, just under the ankle joint, and came out at the other side a little lower down—a very clean wound, which if caused by a Martini bullet would have cost me my foot."

CHAPTER XIII.

Pacifying the Free State—Capture of Prinsloo—Farewell to Volunteers.

IN his address to the Highlanders at the Modder, Lord Roberts promised them plenty of fighting and marching. Such a prospect must have been cheering to Hector Macdonald and his men, but as it turned out they got more marching than they bargained for and not so much fighting as they would have liked. During their long stay in the capital of the Orange Free State, Macdonald's command had been strengthened by volunteer companies of the different Highland battalions, and it was shortly after this that the Highland Brigade was ordered out to guard the Bloemfontein waterworks. Here it remained until the first days of Roberts's great advance on Pretoria, when the Highlanders were attached to General Ian Hamilton's column.

In this phase of war the Highland Brigade had most arduous and trying work to perform. To cope with the extreme mobility of the Boers, Roberts utilised for offensive purposes every available mounted man, and to the infantry fell the task of marching at the tail-end of the column, escorting the convoy, and occupying the different towns as they were captured. This was not

work to the liking of Macdonald, but he was too true a soldier to complain. Thabanchu was taken, and then came a skirmish at Winburg, where the volunteers got their baptism of fire. Winburg had to be occupied, and Colville's division, which included the Highland Brigade, dropped off for this purpose.

Macdonald was entrusted with the task of keeping this corner of the Free State clear of Boers; and this, of course, meant that the Highlanders were continually on the move.

From Winburg to Ventersburg, from Ventersburg to Heilbron, from Heilbron to Reitz—the programme was one long-continued march. No war correspondent was there to pen home glowing accounts of the magnificent fortitude of Macdonald and his men in these trying night marches, when hungry, footsore, and weary they cheerfully did their share of the campaign. It was without glory, but it was necessary.

In August they took part in the important movement that led up to the capture of Prinsloo with 5000 men and five guns. After participating in this success the Highlanders resumed their marching. With half rations and muddy water as food and drink they tramped from place to place, through scorching hot days and bitter cold nights. On September 13th Macdonald won a brilliant success on the railway north of Bloemfontein. A large party of Boers were on the railway line near Brandfort, and Macdonald was sent to cut off the raiders. On the morning of the 13th Hector sighted the enemy, drove them across the Vet

River, and hotly pursued them for miles. Although only seven prisoners were made, the road was strewn with equipment and supplies abandoned by the Boers in their haste. The captures included 31 waggons and 270 oxen, six cases of dynamite, and a large quantity of artillery and rifle ammunition, besides food, blankets, and clothing, mostly seized from our trains.

It gratified Macdonald greatly to find Lovat's Scouts, a force recruited from his own beloved Highlands, and containing many from the haunts and scenes of his early boyhood, taking the active part they did in this engagement; and in his official report he made special mention of the corps, saying their action was "beyond all praise."

The Highlanders found Macdonald a trying commander. He was a stern disciplinarian; he spared neither his men nor himself, and if to the troops he appeared a hard taskmaster his kindly heart appreciated their heroism and endurance. In a letter from Heilbron on August 21st he wrote:—"Believe me, the soldiers deserve everything that can be done for them; they are fine fellows, man and boy, and I have the pick of them. To me it is a pleasure to work with them, but to them, poor fellows, the work is hard, hard, indeed; but not a growl among them all. They march, march, hour after hour, day after day, sometimes with boots or shoes, and often in rags; but they are always cheery and never complain, and at the end of the longest march and weariest day they respond to an extra call on their energies with the alacrity of a schoolboy when he sees a jam pot."

Shortly after this the volunteers who had only enlisted for a year left for home. They had done their part nobly, and when the time came for parting Macdonald, in a farewell order, paid them the following magnificent tribute:—

"It is now nearly, if not quite, a year since the volunteer companies of the Black Watch, the Highland Light Infantry, Seaforth Highlanders, and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders joined the Highland Brigade for active service in South Africa. Your arrival was looked forward to by your comrades of the regular service. You were accorded a cordial welcome by all ranks, and you have well justified your reception. If on first joining, amid strange surroundings and unaccustomed duties incidental to a campaign, you were a little doubtful of yourselves and nervous of criticism, it cannot fail to prove a source of gratification to you to know that your devotion to duty, your anxiety to learn, your conduct under fire, your ready adaptation to your altered circumstances, and the manner in which you identified yourselves with your battalions, and conducted yourselves as part and parcel of them, soon gained you the respect of your Brigadier, the confidence of your commanding officer, and the friendship of the whole brigade, into whose existence you were completely and gladly absorbed. Your own company organisation was preserved under your own officers, and you formed an integral portion of the historic battalion which you joined.

"You are now about to proceed home, and I am

afforded the opportunity of placing on record my high appreciation of your patriotism in responding to your country's call, your gallantry in action, your endurance in the field, and your invariable good conduct and cheerfulness in camp and quarters. Together with your comrades of the line and militia, you have endured the hardships and sufferings inseparable from war with the utmost fortitude and without a murmur. Equally with your other comrades you have taken your full share of all duties in camp, on the line of march, and on outpost and detachment, having won for yourselves by your soldierly qualities the right to do so. You have marched and fought under trying circumstances, in burning heat, in biting cold, and in pouring rain, always without shelter, sometimes with little food, often with your clothes in rags, and your boots and shoes lacking soles, yet with a devotion to duty and a sense of discipline rarely equalled and seldom excelled.

"I shall not easily forget how, when the first volunteer was wounded, you took it as a welcome proof that your baptism of fire, so long looked for, had at last been received. On the return home you will tell the story of your reception by the Highland Brigade, and of your sojourn with the generous, hardy, and enduring soldiers, your late comrades, all of whom, with a glorious recollection of dangers confronted and hardships endured together, wish you God-speed on your journey. Your native land will never forget your patriotic response to her appeal and the sacrifices you have made for her, and I am convinced you need have no fear for your future,

as employers will only be too glad to secure your services as a means of showing their appreciation of your value and of your conduct; and, together with all your countrymen, will give you a Highland welcome home. Gallant volunteers, true Highlanders, farewell!"

With the destruction of Prinsloo's commando, the work of the Highland Brigade, as a Brigade, was practically finished. The various battalions which composed it were scattered along the lines of communications, from Komatipoort to Cape Colony, and Macdonald was appointed to a "roving commission" with a mounted force to sweep the Orange River Colony clear of the enemy, his stock, and his food supplies. After a short spell of this work Macdonald left for England, where he arrived in the beginning of 1901.

CHAPTER XIV.

Knighted—Visit to Australia—Sent to Ceylon—A Paris Tragedy.

WITH the South African War still dragging on, Macdonald's arrival in England was comparatively unnoticed. It was rumoured that the War Office were displeased with him, but the general public was at one on the point that "Fighting Mac" had not got a chance in South Africa. Still, the greatest honour of his career was about to be bestowed upon Macdonald.

On May 13, 1901, he was received at Marlborough House by the King, and had conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, His Majesty at the same time investing him with the insignia of a Knight Commander of the Bath Military Division. He was twice mentioned in the South African despatches, and was praised "for his resolution and energy in carrying out the somewhat thankless task of pacifying the Orange River Colony and protecting its communications."

In the autumn, Sir Hector, as we must now call him, visited Australia and New Zealand. At Melbourne he was entertained by the Caledonian Society and Naval and Military Club, and in every town and city he visited, civilians and soldiers vied with one another to

do him honour. In the Antipodes, "Fighting Mac" was the hero of the hour. At Dunedin, the Caledonians' capital of New Zealand, he received a great welcome from brother Scots. It was here that he gave the colonists some valuable military advice.

"Having voluntarily joined forces with the mother country," he said, "you must expect to have to face the responsibilities involved. I am happy to think that the South African war has not been an unmixed evil. The colonists have taken up their duty by sending their sons to fight for the Empire. But do you think that those nations who have an eye on the Empire's outlying possessions will let you remain unmolested when the mother country is in trouble? If you do you are mistaken, and I warn you now is the time, when the war fever is in your veins, to turn yourselves into a martial nation. Every man in the country should be at the call of his country when need arises. It is not sufficient to give every man a gun. Without drill and discipline men with rifles are nothing but a rabble."

Meanwhile rumour had been busy with his future. It was thought and hoped that a first-class district was in store for him, but no appointment came, and there was a hint now and then that Scotland's popular hero was not in favour at headquarters. He returned to India to take up again the position he had previously held as a Second-Class District Commander, but when he landed at Bombay he was ordered off to Ceylon to command the troops there. This was a severe disappointment to him, and was undoubtedly the beginning

of the end. The announcement of his transference came to him in the nature of a shock. He had had no previous intimation that he was likely to receive such an appointment, and it was quite evident from the first that he did not take kindly to the change. It is significant that before he left London he seemed far from well, although he persisted in assuring his friends that he was all right. Years of hard work in Afghanistan, Egypt, and South Africa, were beginning to tell their tale: the one time iron constitution of "Fighting Mac" was showing signs of wear. Without rest and almost without break he had been on active service for twenty-three years; and the Hector Macdonald who went to Ceylon in March, 1902, was neither in mind nor body the Hector Macdonald who faced the Dervish hordes at Omdurman.

In February of this year a newspaper telegraphic message from Colombo contained the surprising intelligence that Macdonald had sailed for home. No one could understand the reason of the General's homecoming. The War Office was ignorant, his friends could throw no light on the subject, his relatives were in the dark. All the information that Ceylon could vouchsafe was that "General Macdonald had gone to England on private affairs." He arrived in London, stayed a few days, saw his Commander-in-Chief, Lord Roberts, and then left again for Ceylon, it was said. Scotland meantime speculated on what was the meaning of it all.

Then came the bolt from the blue. A Colombo

telegram stated that grave charges had been made against Sir Hector, and that the General was now on his way back to Ceylon to face them. This statement created a painful sensation in Britain, but in Scotland the news produced a feeling of consternation. The Scottish race had unlimited faith in their national hero, and it was with satisfaction that they noted that Hector was on his way to face his accusers. The surprise and dismay soon gave way to the confident belief that Hector would bravely rebut the accusations against his character.

But worse was to follow. On Wednesday, 25th March, the day after the cruel message was conveyed to every part of the civilised world, Hector Macdonald died by his own hand. A revolver shot in a Parisian hotel, and the great soldier was gone to his rest. Scotland was panic-stricken at the intelligence. She gloried in his triumphs, dwelt with pride on his brilliant career; his lowly origin and indomitable courage that had lifted him so far above his fellows had endeared him to the heart of the Scottish people. And now his death came as a national disaster, and all Scotland mourned. His fellow-countrymen concerned themselves not with the charges brought against him—in death as in life he was their hero still.

CHAPTER XV.

His Body Conveyed to Scotland—Burial in Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh.

SCOTLAND will not soon forget the anxious period between Sir Hector's death and his funeral. It was stated that the War Office had made arrangements for the remains to be interred in Paris, and this intelligence seemed to momentarily stun the Scottish nation. With one voice Highlanders everywhere demanded that his body should be brought across the Channel, and buried in his native land. The thought of their dead hero lying in alien soil touched the national conscience; and from Highlands and Lowlands, town and city, came appeals praying that Scotland might be spared such a disgrace.

Mr. William Macdonald, Hector's eldest brother, and the Rev. James Macdonald, his cousin, went to Paris to pay their last respects to their dead kinsman. They reached Paris only to find that Sir Hector's remains were on their way to Scotland. Young Hector Macdonald, the deceased General's son, had made arrangements for the transportation of the body, but acting on his mother's behalf he had given orders for the strictest privacy to be observed in the removal of the remains. This was a severe blow to Hector's brother and cousin,

who had fervently hoped to get one last glimpse of the features they knew so well. It was a great relief to them to know, however, that their kinsman was to be buried on Scottish soil, and it was with somewhat lighter hearts that they retraced their steps.

William Macdonald received many messages of sympathy in his time of trial. The devotion that compelled him—an old, almost broken-down man—to travel from his croft in Dingwall to Paris, and from Paris to Edinburgh, practically without a stop, so that he might pay his last respects to the brother he loved and honoured was touching in the extreme.

Sir Hector's body reached London on Sunday night, and without delay it was conveyed to King's Cross for the next stage of the sad journey. It was hoped that the place of burial would be on his own countryside in Ross-shire, but it was Lady Macdonald's wish that the funeral should take place the following morning in Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh. A large and representative gathering of Scotsmen was held in the Great Northern Hotel, and immediate action was taken to get Lady Macdonald to change her decision. She refused to give way, however, much to the disappointment of the other relatives and clansmen, who would fain have seen the dead warrior laid beside the ashes of his fathers.

At King's Cross Station hundreds of Scotsmen and Scotswomen assembled to do reverence to the dead. Representatives were present from the London Gaelic Society, the Camanachd Club, the Highland Society,

the Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty, Aberdeenshire, Argyllshire, Forfarshire, and indeed every Scottish body in the Metropolis. All exhibited outward signs of mourning, and many of the gentlemen were in Highland costume. With grief written on every line of their faces, the Scotsman stood about in silent groups, and there was anger in every heart because the remains of their distinguished countrymen were being hurried to the grave.

One by one the crowd slowly filed past the waggon, the men reverently uncovering as they obtained a passing glimpse of the interior and its contents. Two pipers wailed out the "Flowers of the Forest;" the train steamed slowly away, and the dead body of Hector Macdonald was speeding towards the land of his youth.

At an early hour the following morning Hector was laid to rest in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh. The cortege was simple but respectful—a plain hearse and one or two cabs. What a lamentable travesty on what should have been: a hero hurried off to his grave like some unclean thing.

The funeral service was short but impressive. The pall-bearers were Lady Macdonald (widow), Mr. Hector Macdonald (son); Mr. William Macdonald, Rootfield, Ross-shire (brother); Mr. Ewan Macdonald, Liverpool (brother); Rev. James Macdonald, Dornoch (cousin); Mr. Peter Morrison, S.S.C., Scottish solicitor to the family; Rev. Dr. Whyte, Edinburgh; Mr. William Grant, representing the London Scottish Societies; Mr.

Hew Morrison, librarian, Edinburgh. About 50 other persons, including representatives of the Clan Macdonald, Clan Mackay, the Highland and other kindred Societies of Edinburgh and Glasgow, gathered around the grave to witness the closing scene. The coffin bore a small brass plate bearing in script engraved lettering the words:—"Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald, K.C.B. Born 1853. Died 25th March, 1903."

Rev. Dr. Whyte, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, then conducted a brief service, which took the form simply of reading the following appropriate passages of Holy Scripture:—

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

But there is forgiveness with thee, that you mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy; and with Him is plenteous redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple ; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

"The grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, for ever, Amen."

And thus was the warrior laid to rest!

CHAPTER XVI.

Review of His Career—A Lonely Man—Tributes.

HECTOR MACDONALD'S career is almost without parallel in the British Army. We have seen how the herd laddie climbed step by step the military ladder till he reached, what he himself termed the summit of every Scottish soldier's ambition, the command of the Highland Brigade; and it stands to reason that his success must have been the outcome of no ordinary soldierly abilities. He, on one occasion, defined the whole course of his progress, from ranker to Major-General, as simple adhesion to duty. But there are thousands upon thousands of the same year's recruits whose adhesion to duty was unimpeachable, who never got beyond their stripes, if they ever got so far.

Hector took with him into the service the best qualities that go to make a great soldier. He was ambitious, determined, courageous, and, above all, he was possessed of a high sense of duty. He had also something of what we term luck. It was lucky for him that he performed his first striking feat of arms in an Afghan defile in support of and under the eye of the Commander-in-Chief himself, and lucky for him that he

was able to perform a second deed of heroism before the memory of the first had died away. This gave him his first lift beyond the non.-com. rank, which girds as an impassable iron circle the common rankers who take the shilling.

Luck was with him, too, in the shape of that divinity which protects some men's lives in the most desperate hazards, and which brought him out scatheless from the most sanguinary encounters. At Majuba, for instance, where his valour should have given him the V. C. in addition to his other honours, he was the only man left unwounded of his devoted command—eight out of the eighteen who held "Macdonald's Kopjie" during long trying hours having been killed outright.

His grit was beyond all praise, and we have only to turn to his Soudan experiences to find the truth of this statement. These were trying times, when, as Kipling sings, they "drilled a black man white, and made a mummy fight." . . . "And England didn't look to know nor care."

There is something heroic about his work in the Soudan. For fourteen long years, and practically without a break, he was at work amongst his black troops, drilling or fighting, and then at the end of all his hard slogging came Omdurman. But it was a lonely man's triumph—with no domestic ties to speak of, there were few to rejoice with him in his greatness.

If he had been a rich man, he would have taken a lengthy rest after Omdurman, but Hector had to make his living by the sword, and after but a brief respite he

was at duty's post in India; from there he was summoned to lend his strength to grapple with the difficulties of the South African situation.

As leader of the Highland Brigade, he was not the buoyant, cheerful soldier of the Soudan. Dysentery and the sun had left their marks upon him, and after his wound at Paardeberg he was depressed, nervous, and moody.

On one occasion, when giddiness overcame him outside Bloemfontein, he said to a brother officer—"I wish they'd sent Maxwell." He meant that he wished that Colonel Maxwell had taken over the Highland Brigade instead of him. Later he unbound the bandages, and showed his gaping leg wound.

"No better," he said bitterly; "if my leg does not keep me off a horse, my head will."

"Oh!" replied his friend, "you're not so bad as that."

"Perhaps not," he said, "but I don't get better."

Ceylon was the last straw. Enfeebled in mind and body, and depressed in spirit, Macdonald, the hero of Afghanistan, Majuba, and Omdurman, passed into an exile which led to the tomb.

In an interview with a representative of the "Northern Weekly," shortly after his death, Hector's eldest brother stated that the General had been seriously unwell and much worried for some time over matters the nature of which was well understood by his friends, but nothing that reflected in any way upon the General's character.

"My brother," said Mr. Macdonald, "though he was physically a strong man, was more sensitive than most,

and any matter that troubled him affected him more deeply than appeared on the outside."

In his last letters home to relatives and friends in the Highlands, the General wrote in the same playfully cheerful manner as characterised his correspondence with intimates. He wrote much regarding his future plans and prospects, and many of his letters contained characteristic comments on everything of note passing in the political and military world.

Many feeling tributes were paid by the press to the dead General, one or two of which may be put on record. Mr. A. G. Hales, the war correspondent of the "Daily News" in South Africa, wrote:—"When his country needed him and rifles talked the language of death, in Egypt, India, or Africa, no man in all our island was more prompt to go where graves were being filled than this bold Scot.

"As I think of him I can almost hear again the rustling of the Highlanders' feet through the veldt grass and the swish of the swaying kilts on the African air. I can picture him at Enslin, that bivouacking ground of the Australian troops, and as the scene comes back I can almost hear again the deep-toned cheers of the sunburned bushmen as they rushed to meet the man who was to them an ideal soldier and a leader of men.

"He came amongst them suddenly, without one warning word, and, stepping from a passing train, marched with elastic tread along the lines of tents where the bushmen lay about in careless fashion, ready

to fight, but averse to go through the routine work of camps.

"To some those rough Colonials might have seemed unsoldierlike and crude. But not to him, for he had fought against just such men, and knew that pipeclay did not make a warrior. He saw them lounging in their shirt-sleeves, with rifles piled in disarray, when the shadows that their tents threw out lay like dark streaks in the brilliant sunshine, and, as he looked, he laughed, the quick, short, magnetic laugh, which told them that they were understood.

"And then the word was passed from group to group that this was 'Hector,' and, like a mob of boys fresh loosed from school, they swarmed around him, tossing their rough felt hats high in the air and cheering as they used to cheer upon the cattle stations when a maddened herd of hoofs and horns broke for the scrub, and had to be wheeled for the open at the risk of life and limb.

"He, alert, keen-eyed, resolute of face and bearing, looking from head to heel a soldier, heard their cheers and tossed them sharp, short words of thanks, and left them the richer for the magnetism of his presence. That was his way. He did not waste his words, but gave to soldiers what the soldier loves—crisp praise or blame.

"I saw Macdonald once again, upon the banks of the Modder, with a broken band of men around him, the shattered remnant of the Highland Brigade, sullen and sore from defeat almost within the shadows that Cronje's

stronghold cast; and none who saw him there, just out of range of Magersfontein's surly heights, could have foretold that he would live to die the death he has died.

"He went amongst the men with eyes that flashed along the shattered ranks and woke the Highland pride. He did not whip them with words, but his every glance told the soldiers that he had hoped for better things from men who wore the Highland colours; and they knew what lay behind his glance, and braced themselves for better things; and in his hand the old Brigade became once more the very flower of Britain's chivalry.

"Once again I saw him, marching with his men across the Free State like a man of fire, and wherever Macdonald and his Highlanders advanced the enemy fell back; for with Macdonald at their head the Highlanders were irresistible. No Boer commando could be got to front them when they handled their bayonets. Now he has gone; and all his faults and failings, like his soldierly gifts, must be buried with him. . . .

"He was brave and resolute, and ready always to take the post where death was busiest, a man of iron nerve of granite will, inflexible where many another wavered. Let this be said of him now he has gone—he never turned his face away from his country's foes and never brought reproach upon his country's flag."

"The man of iron," says the "Sketch," "who stormed the Afghan heights and deserved a dozen Victoria Crosses, the commander who brought his Soudanese Brigade to a pitch of discipline that Frederick the Great would have envied and admired, was not the man

who sat in the Sirhind Club fighting battles with matches and working himself into a state of irritation because he was not sent to South Africa; he was not the man who, when called to the Modder, was angry with his officers on every small occasion, who invented a drill of attack which was fantastic, and who, tireless before, felt that a sea-voyage to Australia was necessary before he could take up his work again. We are sure that Sir Hector was a man brain-sick for the past three years, and that these years and their culminating tragedy should be wiped out when considering him and his career."

"The British Army and the British nation have had full value out of Hector Macdonald (observes the "Outlook"). India scorched him with her fierce suns, Egypt wasted him with her swamps and fevers, and South Africa finally with wound and climate broke down the strong-knit structure of brain and limb, the fine temper, and the high simple courage that nothing till then could quell.

"Hector Macdonald's death will move Scotland to the soul. He was of the same strain as Colin Campbell and many another warrior of the past whose names could stir to any deed possible to soldiers a people at once so practical and so prone to romantic enthusiasm as the Scots."

That brilliant journalist, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, writing in "M.A.P.," paid Hector a particularly warm tribute. "Other generals," he wrote, "were more powerful, more respected, regarded more as the men to hold large ideas

and conduct huge operations, but the popular favourite of the army was undoubtedly Hector Macdonald.

"There were several causes for this preference. The fact that he rose from the ranks of the people, that he was, as a great Scotch nobleman said, 'a son of the soil,' that he was a soldier by choice and by instinct, that he made his way upwards from the lowest to the highest ranks—all these things undoubtedly appealed to a nation that always desires to see the rise of merit from lowliness to distinction.

"But even all these things would not have had the effect of making Hector Macdonald the idol he was if it had not been for the personality of the man himself. There is always something in a man whose courage rises equal to all emergencies—incapable of yielding, or softness, or even wavering; in short, whose courage is perfect—which appeals to human nature more than any other human quality, more than genius, more than goodness. And the courage of Macdonald was of that kind. It was this quite perfect courage of the man that accounted for his whole career.

"There is scarcely a step of it which was not marked by some act of desperate and cool heroism, which made this man stand out from tens of thousands of other brave men. It was not that Macdonald in Afghanistan, in Egypt, in the Transvaal, was not surrounded by brave men. Possibly as brave men as the world holds were encompassing him. It was that there was something supreme in his cold courage that made them all instinctively feel that here was their born leader, their

natural, instinctive, irresistible chief. In all ranks of life there is always a supreme man in his rank. Macdonald was the supreme man."

Sir William Allan, M.P., a brother Scot, who had fought his way up the ladder of fame from a humble beginning, penned the following poetical tribute:—

Let us know him as a soldier,
Which our storied Highlands gave;
Let us know him as a fighter,
Ever ready, ever brave;
What is hid within his story
We have not a right to claim,
'Tis enough for us the glory
Woven round his soldier name.

Let us speak of him as soldier!
And the soldier deeds he did,
Let the shadow of his failings
In his grave be ever hid;
We are proud of him as soldier,
So his memory we'll revere
While the heather and the thistle
To the Scottish heart are dear.

CHAPTER XVII.

His Characteristics—Anecdotes.

To the last Hector Macdonald remained unspoiled by success. Modest, homely, unassuming, he never forgot the friends of his youth; let him be to others what he might, to them he was Hector of his herding days. He never forgot the days of his childhood, nor the cottar homes where he was always so welcome.

On his last visit to the north he called on a crofter woman who had known him since childhood. He visited her as the crofter's son, not as the brilliant officer. Frank and familiar as in the old days he chatted of his youthful escapades, and the old lady, forgetting for the moment his altered position, called him Hector. She hastily apologised, but he interrupted her.

"Continue to call me 'Hector,'" was his frank reply. "I am always only Hector to you, and I would not like you to call me anything else."

There is also a homely touch in the letter he sent to Master Alister Robertson, son of his old friend, Dr. John Robertson, Aberdeen, while he was on his way to take up the command of the Highland Brigade in South Africa.

"My dear Alister," he wrote, "I wish you could meet me at the Cape, but as you cannot, you will, I am sure, send me a line there to wish me good luck in command

of the Highland Brigade, the great ambition of every Scotch soldier. When you write, just tell me what is thought at home of this war, and what is thought of our Generals and our soldiers, and let me ask you to remember that, whatever you hear, and no matter what people say, our Generals are all right, and our soldiers will pull this thing through, and right well too. Don't let anyone cast reflections on one or the other in your hearing."

When the war was in progress, he sent his Queen's chocolate box to his young friend at Glenalmond College, asking him to keep it as a memento.

Hector was always heart and soul for conscription. Once when asked why he "'listed" he answered, "Because we have no conscription;" but apart from that he at different times propounded his views on enforced military service. In a speech in Glasgow in 1899 he said he thought it would be much better if there was no volunteering, but that all citizens should be soldiers. He volunteered himself, and his only reason was that there was no conscription. They had to go into the highways and byways to get recruits, because there were more inducements for the peaceful, and not for the fighting, soldier, and that was volunteering. He certainly did not blame the youth of the nation for being volunteers; but he blamed the hoary heads of the nation for not insisting on something better.

Writing from South Africa during the war, he again voiced his views on conscription. "I am in favour of conscription pure and simple," he wrote, "and have

been for years, the South African war only confirming and strengthening me in my views. I should take the period for service just after a man had finished his apprenticeship, or been a short time a journeyman, but not yet settled down. A year or two at that period, at an age ranging from 21 to 23, would not, I am convinced, injure one's prospects if passed in a well-regulated army, and a well-regulated army a conscript army is bound to be.

"With a conscript army the various mushroom corps you now see cropping into existence would cease, and instead we would have a large and comprehensive organisation, whereby existing units would be kept up to proper strength, and the spectacle of having companies made up of men from threescore different units would be a thing of the past."

After the war, with its patriotic British outburst, Hector was asked if he had changed his views on conscription. His reply rather surprised his interrogator. He was not only impenitent, but his faith in compulsory military service was actually stronger than ever.

"No amount of enthusiasm at from ten to five shillings a day," he said, "will compensate for lack of training and military discipline."

In the recent war in South Africa, he was much more popular with the regulars than with the volunteers and yeomanry. In the course of the long march up country, one of the kilted companies of volunteers naturally became careless, and by the time the men reached Bloemfontein their appearance was not quite regimental.

When the General came round to inspect them they expected compliments on the strength of the small percentage of men who had fallen out. The only compliment they got was an order to get their dirty accoutrements made presentable without a moment's delay. Even the volunteer officers were taken aback, for they, too, had anticipated a cordial welcome.

On another occasion he was in command of a column made up of Highland regiments and some yeomanry. The latter were one day riding in a rather slovenly manner. Fighting Mac stopped them, and told them that if they couldn't make a better shape than that he would dismount them and hand their horses over to his Highlanders.

In his schoolboy days his teacher, Mr. Alexander Treasurer, was struck with his determined nature. Of Hector as a schoolboy he writes:—"He was sent to my school at the age of eight years, and remained about seven. During this period I found him very diligent and attentive to his studies. I especially noticed whatever task he undertook he entered into it with every determination. I think his success in future years greatly depended on this trait. I trust it will not be amiss to give the following anecdote about him after enlisting:—

"In the winter months I kept a night school, which was well attended. Hector about this time got a few holidays to see his parents, and as he had nothing important to do he gave us his presence nightly. After dismissing the school one night several of the

lads proposed that Hector would give them a drill. To this he at once agreed, and before the end of the week they were as perfect in drill as a company of the line."

Determination was ever one of his characteristics. Every step of his career bears that out. In his early struggles with the drill-book; his mastery of Arabic and Hindustani; and his successful training of the Soudanese, it was sheer will power that carried him over obstacles that would have daunted many less braver men. It was this determination that kept him on duty in the Soudan and in South Africa when he ought to have been off duty.

"I remember," writes a military correspondent, "going to see him the day before one of the Soudan battles and finding him with a temperature of 105 deg., and scarce able to stand. 'You ought to be in hospital, General,' I suggested. 'That's what the doctor says,' replied Macdonald, 'and I've just told him that if he reports me sick I'll put him under arrest and have him shot.' Nothing but will power carried the man through, and nothing saved him from collapse but the counter irritant of the battle fever."

Thoroughness was another of his characteristics, and one that brought him no little unpopularity. On reaching Colombo he found the soldiers there far from his standard of perfection. He took them in hand himself, and drilled them for days like a drill-sergeant, to the utter disgust of his subordinate officers. At the Modder also he demonstrated a new scheme of attack by taking a company in hand and pointing out what he

wanted done. This was another unusual proceeding for a General, but one with which little fault can be found. It would tend to the efficiency of the army if we had more officers of Macdonald's stamp.

A story is also told exemplifying the absolute command he had over his men in Egypt. During one of the battles against the Madhi, his brigade, advancing, had distanced the rest of the force, and that the attack should be delivered simultaneously along the whole line it was necessary for him to halt his men. He chose a depression of ground within a few hundred yards of the enemy, where his men were comparatively sheltered, and, to pass the minutes which would elapse before the other brigades came into the alignment, he ordered out the markers, and dressed his regiments on them, as if they were on some ceremonial parade, and the men took up the exact dressing as perfectly and coolly as though they were about to present arms to the Khedive on his birthday, instead of being within a few hundred yards of a battle-hell, into which in a moment or two they were going to plunge to kill or to be killed.

Amongst military outfitters Hector had the reputation of being the most fastidious officer in the British Army in the matter of dress, but in his conversation he was simple and hearty, and would tolerate nothing of a high falutin' nature. It is related that during the Omdurman campaign Bennet Burleigh, who was a close friend of the General, asked a young colleague to accompany him to Macdonald's quarters. The two

journalists proceeded to the tent and lifted the flap, Burleigh remarking, "I have brought a young colleague with me. Allow me to introduce him, General." Macdonald welcomed heartily the young journalist, who began, "I am exceedingly flattered, sir, to meet a soldier with so high a——" But at this point Hector broke in with—"Oh, stop that nonsense. What will you drink?"

Certainly Macdonald was at his best on a battlefield. "I remember," said Sir Evelyn Wood at a banquet to Sir Hector, "an evil morning when our guest was sent with 19 men to hold a place; 17 were struck down, and I think he was as cheerful then, if not in as good a temper, as he is to-night."

One who was present at the banquet given to Hector at Dingwall in June, 1899, thus describes the scene at the station:—

"I see him standing before the men of the North, in the midst of his own people, being made a Freeman of the Royal burgh, and accepting the gift of a sword of honour. I look at him as the eloquence of Provost and county gentlemen proclaim his achievements. He is apparently unmoved, but his features do not suggest harshness or want of appreciation. It is when he responds that one notes the strength and resolution of the man. He was not a practised orator, yet his speeches, whilst the briefest uttered that day, were yet the fullest and most suggestive.

"While he was speaking I noticed the eyelids quiver and the corners of the mouth twitch in a peculiar

manner. He spoke with the utmost deliberation; not a word out of place, although each produced by an evident effort. But they must come! This nervous facial twitching at the time I thought was the result of the hard life which he had endured in foreign lands—India, with its scorching sun; Egypt, with its burning sands; and the rigours of the Soudan campaign. I cannot help thinking that even then the mental deterioration had set in which had its climax in the terrible tragedy in Paris."

Hector's letters to old friends were brief but regular, and to his brother at Rootfield he wrote quarterly—"brief letters, saying little about himself, but asking questions about other people and things generally." These correspondents were greatly astonished when they learned of his being on his way to London without any of them having received a letter from him.

One of them in the North, on learning of his arrival in London, sent his son to the Metropolis in the hope of getting an interview and seeing what was wrong. He arrived too late, for the General had already left for Colombo. Learning later that he was still in Paris, the father telegraphed to his son to proceed to the French capital, and as he was arranging to go the intimation of the tragedy had been received. What might have been can only be conjectured had this kind friend happened to meet the worn-out, sad, lonely soldier, and given him the warm hand-grip of a brother Celt, accompanied with the Gaelic salutation—"Cum 'n ard do chridh, mo charaid!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Scotland in Mourning.

THIS little book would be incomplete without some account of the outburst of national sorrow that followed the news of the death of Sir Hector. The sad intelligence sent a shiver of sorrow through every Scottish heart. Throughout the Scottish cities and towns, in every village and clachan of the Highlands, and in every corner of the earth where the Scottish tongue is spoken, the mournful tidings called forth expressions of bitter regret and heartfelt sorrow. Men, women, and children of all ranks and classes mourned the loss of the Highland hero as for one near and dear.

The day following the tragedy in Paris was indeed a day of dool throughout Scotland. The general feeling was that of dazed and sorrowful apathy. The homecoming of the General had been unexpected, the news that he had suddenly left London en route for Ceylon had aroused an uneasy feeling of surprised resentment. The Scottish people had nursed a feeling of vexation over what they deemed the banishment of their hero to Ceylon: the bewildering intimations concerning the General's movements fanned that feeling into irritation.

Stunned by the news of his death, the quick of sorrow lasted for but a night and a day. Then came the intimation that arrangements were in progress for a quiet funeral in Paris. This had the immediate effect of rousing the Highlanders from their stupor. The heather was at once on fire, and the glare was reflected, not only from all the Scottish centres of population, but the Scots in London at once responded. Never did fiery cross flit more quickly through the length and breadth of Scotland than during the short, sad period between the death and burial of Hector Macdonald. Scotsmen everywhere joined in the lament and in making appeal that the body of Hector should be brought to his native land.

The Government Offices in London, the British Embassy at Paris, members of Parliament, and all whose aid could be enlisted, were bombarded with letters and telegrams of earnest appeal; the relatives were inundated with telegraphic messages pleading that the funeral should take place in Scotland; representatives of Highland Societies and other organisations threw up their everyday duties, and devoted themselves to the task of averting what they regarded as the casting of a slur on Scottish fame. During the day and right through the night the telegraph wires were at work on the messages passing and repassing between the many representatives of the Highland clans and other societies.

This Highland outburst redounded to the credit of the myriad hero-worshippers, and demonstrated better

than any arranged public ceremonial could have done the place held by Hector Macdonald in the hearts of his countrymen. During the fervour of this Highland outburst, some of his devotees gave utterance to bitter complaints concerning the treatment of their idolised General. Some at least of these complaints were unfair and unjust, and ought to have been left unsaid. Nevertheless the bitterness of the undertone of the Highland lament over Hector Macdonald revealed the existence of a strong feeling that the struggle of the Highlander from the ranks to the proud position of leader of the Highland Brigade had been beset with difficulties such as officers of higher caste are not called upon to encounter. The Highlanders had long recognised the loneliness of their hero, and it galled them to the hearts' core that their countryman, who had carved out a splendid, albeit a lonely, career, who had fought his country's battles in Africa, in India, and in Egypt; who had died in the bitterness of loneliness, should be buried in foreign soil. The thought was more than Scotsmen could bear, and so it was that the whole country rang with the earnest pleading that the body should be brought to Scotland for burial.

When intimation was received that Lady Macdonald had decided that the funeral should take place in Scotland, there was a general feeling of relief. The representatives of the Highland organisations, however, were not satisfied. They were embued with the feeling that it was the duty of Highlanders to endeavour to secure a public funeral in the Highlands. Late on the even-

ing of the Sunday when the body of the General had been brought to London, and before the departure for Scotland, a remarkable gathering of representative Scots assembled at the Great Northern Station. Hundreds of Scotsmen and Scotswomen had hurried to be present at the departure of the funeral train. Lady Jeune, along with Sir William Allan, M.P., and other Scottish members of Parliament were present on the platform.

At an informal meeting held in the Great Northern Hotel, the leading representatives of the London Scottish organisations reported the receipt of urgent messages from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth, Inverness, Stirling, and indeed from all parts of Scotland, requesting that every effort should be made to induce the relatives to make such arrangements as would permit the Highlanders and Scotsmen generally attending the funeral. Lady Macdonald, however, evidently acting under a high sense of duty, and under the advice of kindly advisers, adhered to a decision that the funeral should take place in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, at dawn on the following morning.

This decision was quietly acquiesced in by the Scots in London, but there were many who sorrowfully regretted that so many leal-hearted friends in Scotland would not be able to reach Edinburgh in time to be present at the funeral. On Monday morning, when Scotland awoke to the knowledge that the funeral had already taken place, bitter regret was universal. Later on it became known that the War Office had proffered

a military funeral, which was declined by Lady Macdonald.

Sorrow, however, still held sway, and the wreath-clad grave in the Dean Cemetery became the Mecca of sorrowing pilgrims from all quarters of Scotland. Morning after morning crowds of men, women, and children awaited the opening of the gates. Day after day a steady stream of mourners passed along the walks to the grave. Members of Parliament, representatives of the professions, men and women of all ranks and classes joined in this remarkable pilgrimage. Highland and Clan organisations sent delegations to place "in memoriam" wreaths, and Scottish organisations in the Colonies and in all lands telegraphed instructions for the placing of their contributions towards the raising of the floral memorial.

On the Sunday following the funeral the scene at the grave was remarkable. In thousands the people filed past the grave, and during the six hours the cemetery was open it was computed that 30,000 persons in this way showed their love and respect for the dead soldier. Such a pilgrimage surely demonstrates the place which Sir Hector had won in the hearts of the Scottish people.

Scottish attention concentrated in a movement for the raising of a monument. At a special meeting of Dingwall Town Council it was unanimously resolved to offer a site for a Macdonald Memorial on Mitchell Hill, overlooking the late General's birthplace. In the Council Chamber were placed two large wreaths of

laurel leaves sent from Paris by a British admirer of the Highland leader. The Town Council of Inverness and the Town Councils of other Scottish centres passed resolutions declaring that the Councils joined with their fellow-countrymen in the universal note of sorrow which had arisen throughout the whole world over the lamented death of General Hector Macdonald. At Glasgow a meeting of clansmen was convened to make arrangements for joining in the movement for the raising of a Macdonald Memorial.

Not since the days of the '45 has such a wave of feeling passed over the Scottish Highlands, and throughout Scotland and wherever Scotsmen gather the sob of the Highlander called forth answering sob. Throughout England, amongst all classes, from the highest in the land to the poorest, the devotion of the Scots to their hero called forth right kindly sympathy. It was realised that the Scottish lament was that of leal hearts, and chorded with the passion of patriotism and daring which enabled Hector the herd laddie to do brave deeds on many testing fields.

Scotland's mourning over the Highland hero now at rest was indeed national tribute worthy the nation and the achievements of General Hector Macdonald.

APPENDIX.

THE SOUL OF SCOTLAND STIRRED.

As Illustrated by the Newspaper Press.

THE outburst of feeling all over Scotland is well illustrated by the following selections from the newspaper press. The first blow—the undefined charges, needlessly emphasised as "of a very grave character," said to be made against Sir Hector Macdonald, caused unconcealed dismay; the second blow—the news that he had shot himself in a Paris hotel, was the cause of stupor and poignant grief. But the last, and the worst-felt of all was the undecent burial of the national hero, a stealthy burial insisted on against the expressed wishes and desire of all his blood relations, backed up by the unanimous sentiment of the Scottish nation. Let the blame for this last lie where it will, it can not be forgotten.

Allowing that privacy was desired and that it might be conceded, surely the dead warrior need not have had his memory insulted by having his body smuggled across London in a parcel van.

The following article by the Rev. J. K. Campbell, Bridge of Allan, taken from the "Stirling Journal" of April 3rd, is interesting as showing the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-countrymen in Ceylon, at the very time when malicious reports would hold him up to scorn, and on the eve of the fearful tragedy that ended his career:—

"We were told that we could get a first-class berth on the 'Ophir,' which was due at Port Said within the next ten days.

The 'Ophir,' we were told, is the ship in which Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales took their tour round the world. She left Colombo the other day, and she has on board the Archbishop of Sydney, General Sir Hector Macdonald, Sir William MacMillan, and other notable persons. Her first port of call after this is Naples. We agreed to go by the 'Ophir,' and commissioned the representatives of Messrs Henry Gaze & Sons to secure for us a suitable berth. In the interval we went by train to stay at Ismailia. In less than ten days it was announced that the 'Ophir' had arrived at Suez, and it soon became obvious that the 'Ophir' would have her full complement of passengers from Egypt. The trains from Cairo, from Alexandria, and other cities, came in laden with English and American tourists, homeward bound with the 'Ophir.' We went on board when she came to the Canal opposite our hotel, and found all we required ready for us. All next day the 'Ophir' remained in the harbour of Port Said, and at 4 p.m. moved off in the direction of Naples.

"The following morning at breakfast we began to scan our fellow-passengers in the hope of seeing the renowned hero, General Sir Hector Macdonald. It was not till after luncheon that we saw him to speak to. He was sitting at the second table from the one at which I sat, and we both rose at the same time to go on deck. I accosted him when mounting the stair leading to the handsome drawing-room of the ship, which remains very much the same, I was told by the steward, as the Prince and Princess of Wales had it. I deemed it unnecessary to be formally introduced to the General, and so I said—

"'I suppose I am addressing General Sir Hector Macdonald?'

"'That,' he said, 'is my name.'

"'Will you permit me, Sir Hector, to say that my name is Campbell, and that I am descendant of that branch of the clan which made a cruel bit of history with your clan at Glencoe.'

"'Indeed,' said he, 'I have no doubt that you are quite familiar with that bit of history.'

"'May I venture to say further that your countrymen, of

which I am one, are proud of you and the part by which you have reflected honour upon your countrymen and native land during the past few years.'

"'All too flattering,' said the General, 'and too honouring; I only tried to do my duty to my King and country, and both have already honoured me beyond my deserts.'

"At this I offered the General my snuff box to take a snuff of the 'Campbell Mixture,' but he declined to take snuff, as it made him sneeze too much, but he scrutinized the inscription on the box, and said—

"'I like to see the like of that.'

"'I presume you will have the Gaelic, Sir Hector?'

"'O yes,' he replied; 'I would not like to lose my mother tongue. You may find men who can speak in seven languages or more, and each of these languages represents seven or more different men, but the real man is the man who speaks his mother tongue. Am I right?'

"'I think you are. That, I think, is borne out by the fact that a man in distress or when dying prays in his mother tongue. Our Lord, you remember, when on the Cross, used not Latin or Greek, but Hebrew when He died.'

"From this somewhat grave and debatable subject we passed into the region of practical politics.

"'You and your compeers, Sir Hector, were charged with some measure of harshness when you burned down the Boers' farms in South Africa.'

"'I will tell you a story,' said the General, 'that somewhat illustrates the reason of that. One day in the Transvaal I went far afield on horseback, and when I reached my destination I dismounted in front of a Boer farmhouse, and sat down on the only available seat, a water stoup, in front of a kitchen door. I asked the Boer farmer if he would kindly tell me how many children he had. He at once answered by saying, 'I have dorty-one.' His present wife was standing by, and corroborated. 'You have had,' she said, 'four wives, and by the first wife you had ten children, and by the second seven,

and by the third seven, and by me, your fourth wife, you have had seven, and all these make dorty-one.' With such men, and such prolific wives, had we left things as they were, the Boers would soon be more plentiful than when the war began.'

"This was the first of several stories recited by the General, and each of them showed that Sir Hector had a full share of Celtic humour. When the General had finished his story telling, the Archbishop came and took him away to complete some game at draughts or chess which they had begun in the early part of the day. In the evening I again met the General in the drawing-room, when our conversation was about the Highlands, the crofters, and the Gaelic language, and he spoke with an animation and elevation of feeling which I had not observed to characterise him in any previous conversation. I thought sometimes that he spoke as from under a cloud, or if he felt somewhat apprehensive of too much freedom of speech. But in his mother tongue, although he was not very fluent in it, or in the English tongue either, his conversation was hearty and definite. He seemed to be quite at home with me, as he could not be with a Sassunnach, even with Dr Smith, or any third person. Of course, I scorned to ask under cover of our tongue what the object of his visit to London was. I had heard that some of the passengers had been questioning him on that point before I saw him, and that they had pronounced him extremely reticent on all matters pertaining to his office. He was held in high esteem, especially by the contingent which joined the 'Ophir' at Colombo. One day I saw a large gathering of ladies assembled in my corner of the dining-saloon, and I asked the steward what it meant. He replied saying, 'It is a gathering in honour of General Sir Hector Macdonald. Those of his friends from Ceylon who know him know that this is his birthday, and they have resolved to celebrate the event by a tea meeting.' The majority of those present at that gathering were from Ceylon, but among them was Dr. Smith, the Archbishop of the Colonies, and Lady MacMillan, and other notable persons. When the General came upstairs, I asked

him in Gaelic, 'What meant the tea meeting,' and he said, 'They were pleased to commemorate or celebrate my birthday.'

"'How old then may you be to-day, Sir Hector?'

"'I am fifty years old to-day, according to the almanac.'

"'I also take leave to congratulate you, Sir Hector, and may you live to be useful and happy for many years to come!'

"The 'Ophir' still speeds on her way as if heedless of all opposition by the waves, and the almost spent force of an Adriatic storm, and had now come opposite to Mount Etna and Stromboli, which His Grace, the Archbishop, could not get me to see. He supplied me with his binocular glasses, and pointed out the direction in which I was to look, but I really failed to see the fiery Mount. The General was less a Thomas; for he admitted that he saw the mount.

. . . . . .

"Next morning we came to know that the launch would not leave the 'Ophir' for at least another hour, and therefore we prepared to go by one of the small boats which was put at our disposal. Being now ready the General, Sir Hector, bade us good-bye, and we in turn bade him a cordial farewell in Gaelic. We told him to take care of himself amid the dangers of life, and the worst of these might arise from those who might avow to be his friends, but were in heart as Judas. 'You are a 'ranker,' Sir Hector, like me, and those who were born with the proverbial silver spoon in their mouth cannot endure the man who was not, to be set over them.'

"Sir Hector looked and listened, but said nothing, as if wondering what I was referring to. On this came the Archbishop and Sir William MacMillan, and said good-bye, and we stepped gently into the small boat, our ears being regaled meanwhile with the songs of Italian men and maidens—a host of whom in small boats were now around the 'Ophir,' trying to move the passengers to give them as much as would pay for their breakfast. Thus we parted with General Sir Hector Macdonald, and to-day, with thousands of his countrymen, we deplore what has happened, and that we shall see him no more."

General Macdonald's brilliant career and death has called forth in no uncertain way the best efforts of the bards. The following are culled from a poem of twenty-two verses, by William Macdonald, which appeared in the "Scots Pictorial" of April 4th:—

From rank to rank, and up and on,
Passing with brave forth-going mind,
One thing he did not think upon—
The safeties that he left behind.

The strength of clanship and of kin,
The kindness of a common breed,
The brother's hand, that holds from sin
Or wards the vengeance of the deed—

Enough! each well-fought battle lends
Examples: he was one of those
Who fight their way from all their friends
To stand surrounded by their foes.

Who gave this fellow leave to rise?
Why are this Private's praises sung?
Be sure that there were watchful eyes—
Perhaps there was a lying tongue.

We know not: it may ne'er be known:
But this may serve as well as all—
That from the Council or the Throne
No hand was stretched to stay his fall.

Appended to the poem is the following editorial note, which most people will accept without its opening reservation:—

"Without wholly subscribing to the sentiment of the foregoing verses, we think they very forcibly express what is generally felt to have been the key to the tragedy of General Macdonald's life and the still more poignant tragedy of his death. The just reward of his great distinction as a soldier meant his elevation to a sphere in which he found himself an

alien, almost an intruder, for in none of our social strata are the prejudices of caste so hard and inflexible as in the military. Anything of the nature of deliberate malice we would not attribute to a body of men who are essentially gentlemen, but cruelty can be passive as well as active, and the threatened court-martial, which drove the brave man to his end, was a dishonour that would probably never have been allowed to cast its shadow upon a soldier of equal distinction but greater social influence. It is said that in earlier days, when Macdonald achieved a brilliant coup on the field of battle by disobeying orders, a comrade jocularly remarked that he would be court-martialled. In reply Macdonald pointed to his weapon. 'That first,' he said. It was his way; and in the end he took it. Who shall judge him?"

It is still remembered that when General Macdonald was being feted by his countrymen after his return from Egypt, he remarked to a friend that "little do my friends know the harm they are doing me with my superiors in thus making so much of me." These words contained the key to his downfall, and how discouraging they seem to any "ranker" with any hopes of a career in the army. When the motion for a grant of £30,000 to Lord Kitchener was first announced, after the re-conquest of the Soudan, some members of Parliament resolved to move an amendment recommending that £10,000 of the sum should be granted to the then Brigadier-General Hector Macdonald, as a recognition of the fact that he had been the saviour of the situation in the most important engagement of that campaign. On General Macdonald coming to hear of the intention, he personally approached the friends who were interesting themselves on his behalf, and successfully prayed to them to forego their kind but mistaken action, remarking with emphasis, that any coupling of his name with that of Lord Kitchener would of a certainty be "his ruin." The amend-

ment was never moved. Apropos to this, and in confirmation of his treatment in this respect, the following letter is worth reproducing:—

"(To the Editor of the 'Glasgow Herald.')

"April 3, 1903.

"Sir,—In the Army List there are some instructive pages devoted to 'special lists,' of which one is a special list of 'officers receiving rewards for distinguished and meritorious services.' Put as shortly as possibly, these are:—

	Cavalry and Infantry.	Artillery and Engineers.	Indian S.C.	Total.
Field-Marshal, ...	1	—	—	1
Generals, ...	7	8	—	15
Lieut.-Generals, ...	15	12	4	31
Major-Generals, ...	41	11	13	65
Colonels, ...	24	7	7	38
Totals, ...	88	38	24	150

"In addition to the above, there are about 100 officers of lower rank in the home and Indian army enjoying rewards. What these rewards are I am not in a position to say, but no doubt they are pecuniary, and, in the case of the higher ranks, are probably substantial.

"Why does one look in vain in this list for the name of Macdonald? We are content to remain unenlightened as to some of the closing episodes in his career; but I think we are entitled to know why a soldier conspicuous, if ever man was, for 'distinguished and meritorious service' did not receive the 'reward' given to other men, whom I need not name. I commend the list to the careful perusal of those to whom an Army List is accessible.—I am, etc.,

"PLAIN CITIZEN."

Contrast with this the known fact that, at the very time when this grant of £30,000 was being made to Lord Kitchener, the pathetic truth that the real hero of Omdurman went to the Hotel Cecil, London, without a sixpence in his pocket, to receive a Sword of Honour at the hands of the Duke of Athole, who was presiding over an influential meeting of his fellow-countrymen, anxious to do all the honour in their power to their hero and guest. On being told after the meeting that he ought to feel a proud man, "Yes," he replied, "but I would rather have the value of it in my pocket just now." His battles were for his King and country indeed; they brought nothing to himself. The "ranker" who dares aspire to a commission in the army will find that his hardest battles will not be fought in the open field. Sir Hector Macdonald was not a spendthrift, but he was open-handed to a fault. This the writer had evidence of only the other day. It was at the moment when our hero's tragic end was the sole subject of conversation everywhere and with everybody. Two army pensioners were discussing the dead General on the platform of Stirling Station within the writer's hearing. One of the two had served in the General's Brigade in South Africa, and he was relating to his comrade how, when invalided in camp, he was visited by General Macdonald, who minutely inquired into all the circumstances of his case; where he belonged to; and if his wants were being attended to. After giving the sick and wounded soldier a few words of kindly advice, he put his hand in his pocket, took out a sovereign, and putting it into the soldier's hand, bade him good-bye. In an officer of General Macdonald's rank, with no income but his pay, this was a generous tip indeed. Although admittedly a stern and strict disciplinarian, the following extract from "Truth" is corroborating evidence of his kindly heart:—"A man told me the other day that he had spoken with the General's servant, who would stake his life that there was no foundation for the charges. As no man is a hero to his valet, this would be testimony of some weight."

The Desire of His Relatives.

The Rev. James Macdonald, United Free Church, Dornoch, desires it to be stated that he went to Paris with the simple purpose of bringing the remains of a dear relative, Hector Macdonald, to some resting-place among the hills of his native land—wherever the will of Scotsmen pointed. Although frustrated in this effort, he is glad that so much has been accomplished as that he rests in Scottish soil.

Letters are pouring in from all parts of the country, and it is impossible for him to answer each separately. On behalf of himself, of Mr. William Macdonald of Rootfield, and other relatives he desires to express warmest thanks to his countrymen at home and abroad for the overwhelming tribute of sympathy to the memory of one of whom he can never think but with affectionate esteem.

Mr William Macdonald, the eldest brother of the deceased, who feels the death of his distinguished brother very keenly, said he did not wish to make any remarks at all about the proceedings. He would, of course, have liked him to have been buried among his own people.

It may be here mentioned that the first move of the military authorities was to communicate with Mr. William Macdonald, offering to see to all arrangements for the funeral if the body was buried in Paris. But why the "if?" Were it the body of any other General of equal rank, but of superior social influence, the message would have been to the effect that the body would be sent for burial to wherever the relatives wished, and it would have been sent with due reverence to the dead, and with the pomp and panoply usually given to military funerals, no matter what the rank of the deceased. There would have been no "if." Mr. William Macdonald's acquiescence, as he afterwards explained, was on account of

his want of means. He had no alternative. In his grief he did not realise that Scotland would feel honoured in being allowed to bear all the expenses. Immediately this fact was brought home to him he placed the arrangements entirely in the hands of the London Highland Committee, which body had taken the initiative in offering to relieve the relatives of the expenses.

In view of this, the Scottish people in London, acting in concert with the Scottish people and Societies all over Scotland and England, were accordingly arranging for the burial to take place either at Kilmorack, in Inverness-shire, where Sir Hector's father and mother were buried, and which is the family burying-ground, or at Dingwall, near where the dead hero was born, and where the Town Council had offered a special plot of ground. During the time the brothers were journeying South, however, Lady Macdonald seemingly established her legal position with the War Office authorities. This was the position that faced the brothers on their arrival at King's Cross on Saturday morning. Mr. William Macdonald, the late General's eldest brother, and the Rev. James Macdonald (cousin) went to Paris, however, and returned to London with the General's remains, which were smuggled across London to King's Cross in the early hours of Sunday morning. The brothers and representatives of all the Scottish and Highland Societies represented to the solicitor acting for Lady Macdonald that it was the desire of the blood relatives and the whole Scottish nation to pay fitting and proper tribute to the gallant dead, and accord the remains all the honours of a national funeral. The solicitor replied that he was acting on the advice of the Lord Advocate and Lord Balfour of Burleigh. It has since been officially denied that the Government was in any way responsible.

The Funeral.

A PATHETIC SCENE.

"NOT A DRUM WAS HEARD."

When it became known on Sunday night that it was definitely settled to bring the deceased General's body to Scotland, his countrymen never doubted for one moment but that the hero should be laid to rest side by side with his parents. Imagine their surprise, disappointment, and indignation on learning next day that—in accordance with Lady Macdonald's instructions—the burial took place in Edinburgh in the early morning ere the city had thoroughly awakened from the slumbers of the previous night. Only a few work-people who happened to be at the Station at that early hour of the morning knew of the melancholy event. As the hearse containing the remains followed by two or three cabs sped hurriedly towards the Dean Cemetery, the sight must indeed have been a melancholy one. If the tragedy in the Paris Hotel was so inexpressibly sad as to send a thrill of pain through every Scottish heart, the scene by that newly-opened grave in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, on Monday morning was not less pathetic. "'Twas sad as sad could be" to behold one of Britannia's greatest soldiers laid to rest without those honours which are due to the humblest private in His Majesty's service; and it is sincerely to be hoped that something may yet be done by his fellow-countrymen which will at least show to those in high places that Hector was beloved of the Scottish people.

A small crowd had collected at the cemetery gate, but none were allowed to pass inside, as the instructions of the authorities had evidently been strict upon this point. The coffin was lifted from the hearse to the grave-side, where a short but impressive service was conducted by Rev. Dr. Whyte, of St. George's U.F.

Church. The pall-bearers were:—Mr. William Macdonald (eldest brother), Mr. Ewen Macdonald (brother), Rev. James Macdonald (cousin), Lady Macdonald, Mr. Hector Duncan Macdonald (son), Mr. William Grant, representing London Scottish Societies; Mr. Peter Morison, S.S.C., and Dr. Whyte, all of whom were deeply moved.

"SLOWLY AND SADLY THEY LAID HIM DOWN."

The coffin was then laid into its narrow bed, and in little more than half-an-hour after its arrival in the Scottish Capital, the body of our greatest modern hero was consigned to its last resting-place.—"Highland News."

The scene at the funeral is thus described in the "Glasgow Evening News," by an eye-witness:—

It must be rarely, indeed, that Edinburgh has known of a six o'clock funeral. The Princes Street scavengers stared as the hearse trotted briskly past them, its dozen cabs behind; workmen walking on the bridge high over the village of Dean, looked and wondered; but they did not know that this was Hector Macdonald. How could they? He was being disposed of secretly—for so it was ordained—against the will of all Scotland; the greatest precautions were taken to prevent the public from learning where he was to go. If it had not been that his brother, acting upon the pressure of Highlanders in London, divulged the Dean Cemetery was the final destination of the body that left King's Cross last night, there would not have been more than half-a-dozen people at the funeral. But the fiery cross went round, and in the grey of the morning in Waverley Station the dead man's fellow-countrymen were not altogether unrepresented. What their opinion was of the proceedings, they were at no pains to conceal. The train had no sooner drawn up at the platform than several deputations waited on Lady Macdonald, and there was handed to her a sheaf of telegrams whose terms were all in favour of a postponement of the burial for some hours at least. But there

was no postponing. The coffin was transferred at once to its open funeral car; the mourners took their seats in their carriages and cabs, and the cortege started on its way. There was not a flag at half-mast or truck in all Edinburgh, for Edinburgh was in ignorance. The Castle—grey, silent, indifferent as fate—loomed up above the humble, hurried cavalcade, manifestly quite unconscious that Hector Macdonald passed.

Hector Macdonald is buried in a place that has no claim on him, that is utterly inappropriate; buried by stealth.

With no less vehemence does the "People's Journal" give utterance to the feeling of Scotland:—

Additional pain has been caused in Scotland—indeed to Scotsmen everywhere—by the circumstances of Sir Hector Macdonald's burial. When news came that a grave charge was made against the great Scottish soldier, we all felt as though a personal blow had been dealt. His death by his own hand only intensified the pain of the first shock. It was a deed, everyone acknowledged, for which he could not be held responsible. At first it was intended to hurry his body into a grave in a foreign land. Representations from men of his own blood prevented this being accomplished; the ashes of a heroic Scotsman ought not, it was felt, to lie in alien soil. His body was brought to Edinburgh, but scarcely with the pomp and circumstance befitting a British soldier, much less a general officer of the highest achievement and distinction. In another column will be read how his coffin was secreted in the English Church at Paris; how it was despatched to London with no more ceremony than though it was a box of drapery goods; how it was labelled "H. A. M., Edinburgh;" how it was trundled across London on a parcel van as so much merchandise, not as the remains of a British General on the active list; and, finally, how, on arrival at Edinburgh, the funeral ceremonial was hurried over in the early hours of the morning, as though it were the burial of a leper or a felon.

Who is responsible for this outrage on Scottish sentiment we cannot say. Let us assume that the errors of the gallant

General were of the gravest. No matter what sin he committed, was it not to be forgiven? Was he so disgraced that the transport of his body was to be one long insult both to his memory and to the sentiment of the Scottish nation? Are all the errors of our army officers treated in this inexorable fashion? When they fail in their duty is their offence visited even upon their dead bodies? Let us remember, too, that in Sir Hector Macdonald's case there was always a doubt. It was officially declared that he had done nothing against the law of Ceylon. A court-martial had been summoned to hear the charge, whatever it was, made against him. But no evidence had been led, and no decision reached. In such circumstances would not a dog get the benefit of the doubt? The brave Scottish soldier, however, was hustled to his grave with scarcely more ceremony than would be conceded to a convict.

After the Funeral.

FLORAL TRIBUTES.

The cemetery was opened to the public at nine o'clock, and immediately a little crowd of people who had been waiting trooped to the grave-side. A respectably-dressed man and his wife were first at the grave, and both burst into tears as they looked at it, and others dropped bunches of flowers as their tribute, among these being some boys on their way to school.

Many beautiful wreaths were reverently laid on the new-made grave—emblems of the love and respect of thousands. Among them was one bearing the inscription, "With deepest sorrow from the Scottish Clans' Association of London." The Highland Societies of the Metropolis were represented, "With profound sorrow and deepest sympathy for our gallant and brave General from the Gaelic Society of London." "Requiescat in pace" was another written tribute. The London

Argyllshire Association sent a lovely wreath "With deepest sympathy for our Highland hero." Among the personal tributes a simple and touching one bore the words, "From his old friend, Lady Jeune," while another was sent "In affectionate remembrance, from Mr. Reginald J. G. Dunning, Mrs. Dunning, Miss Dunning, and Miss Beatrice Dunning."

Many people continued to visit the grave later. Among additional wreaths on the grave are two from Paris, on one of which is a card bearing the following:—"Laurel wreaths to the great dead, from strangers, which are denied to him where he earned them." A beautiful floral cross from Dingwall was accompanied by the inscription—"With deep sympathy for a brave man. From his leal countrywomen."

Throughout the day there was a constant stream of reverent spectators passing the grave, and it was noticeable that many stooped and placed bunches of flowers amongst the wreaths. A number of the flowers were tied with ribbon of the Macdonald tartan. Numerous private carriages drew up at the gates of the cemetery, and it was the case that homage was paid to the dead General by all ranks of society.

Mr. James Russell, chief City Officer, placed a wreath on the grave from the London Ross, Cromarty, and Sutherland Association, which had been sent to the Lord Provost with the request that this should be done. The wreath, which was composed of camelias, lilies of the Nile, orchids, etc., was in the form of a Celtic cross, tied with ribbons of the tartan of the different clans. A card attached bore the following:—"From the London Ross, Cromarty, and Sutherland Association as a tribute of respect for the memory of a gallant soldier and faithful son of Ross-shire."

The Caledonian Society and Scottish Corps of South Australia cabled yesterday to Mr Erskine, florist, George Street, Edinburgh, to place a wreath on the grave as a tribute from the Society and Scottish Corps. The wreath, which will be about four feet in circumference, will be composed of choice flowers, including orchids and thistles.

Pilgrimage to the Grave.

On the first Sunday after the dead hero was laid to rest, April 5th, the scene in the Dean Cemetery was one not easily forgotten. The following is a press account:—Yesterday the Dean Cemetery of Edinburgh was the scene of a vast pilgrimage to the grave of Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald. At mid-day, when the gates of the cemetery were opened to the public, between 3000 and 4000 persons were admitted. The weather was fine, and the stream of people from the city being continuous and steady, it was deemed advisable to regulate their progress even outside the cemetery. Police-Superintendent Moyes and about forty constables accordingly formed a queue five deep, which extended from the entrance at Deanpath to the Dean School in the valley to the north, the crowd going cemeterywards taking their places at the end of the queue. On the average an hour passed before each person found himself or herself at the General's last resting-place, and it was computed that in six hours no fewer than 30,000 persons had visited the grave.

To such an extent was the pilgrimage kept up that it is announced as we go to press that the cemetery directors have issued instructions to allow no more floral tributes to be placed on the grave.

The Gathering of the Clans.

STIRLING GAELIC SOCIETY.

At a meeting of the Gaelic Society of Stirling the following resolution was submitted and unanimously agreed to:—"That it be recorded in the minutes of the Society the profound

sorrow with which the members, many of whom are natives of the same county, regard the tragic death of Major-General Sir Hector A. Macdonald, K.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., whose striking and brilliant career, coupled with splendid heroism on many a field of battle, enshrine him for ever in the hearts of his countrymen, to whom his name and fame will remain an imperishable possession." It was remitted to the council of the Society to take what steps might be considered necessary to support the national memorial to be raised to the memory of the deceased.

GLASGOW GAELIC SOCIETY.

At a meeting of the Glasgow Gaelic Society, held under the presidency of Mr. John Mackay, it was unanimously resolved to express sympathy with the relatives of the late Sir Hector Macdonald, and the hope that the remains may be re-interred in some part of the Northern Highlands. The secretary was instructed to co-operate with other Highland Societies in any steps that may be taken.

SUTHERLANDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

At the annual meeting of the Glasgow Sutherland Association, held in the Religious Institute Rooms—Mr Murdo Macleod in the chair—the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:—"That this meeting records its profound sorrow at the great national loss sustained through the death of Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald, and its unqualified approbation of the proposed national memorial to perpetuate the memory of one of Scotland's noblest and most distinguished sons, whose heroic deeds on behalf of King and country on the field of battle won for him the undying love and gratitude of his fellow-countrymen."

EDINBURGH CLAN MACDONALD ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting of the Council of the Edinburgh Clan Macdonald Association held in the chambers of Messrs Auld & Macdonald, W.S., Thistle Street—Mr. James Macdonald, W.S., vice-president, presiding—it was resolved to convene a meeting of the Highland Clan Societies in Edinburgh for the 9th inst. to discuss the proposed memorial to the late Sir Hector Macdonald. It was suggested that the memorial should take the form of a monument in the Dean Cemetery, and one of a more national character at Dingwall.

LONDON SCOTSMEN'S MOVE.

At a meeting held in London it was unanimously agreed "that this meeting of Scotsmen in London forms itself into a Provisional Committee, with a view of honouring the memory of Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald, and that with this object all the associations in London be communicated with to appoint delegates to arrange for a general meeting of Scotsmen in London to decide on the course to be adopted."

Colonel J. S. Young presided, and, although not present as officially representing their societies, there were in attendance members of the Highland Society of London and twenty-eight other societies and associations in London.

ABERDEEN HIGHLAND ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting of Aberdeen Highland Association the secretary, Mr Hugh MacDonald, was instructed to write to the secretary of Glasgow Macdonald Society that while the Aberdeen Association did not approve of a central fund for the purpose of erecting a memorial to the late Sir Hector Macdonald in the Dean Cemetery, they would be glad to contribute if the proposal was to include a memorial either in Aberdeen, where he began his military career, or in Dingwall, his native town.

ROYAL SCOTTISH CORPORATION AND THE LATE GENERAL.

At the usual Quarterly Court of the Governors of the Royal Scottish Corporation, held yesterday at the Hall, Crown Court, Fleet Street, London, Mr Alexander Ritchie, J.P., who presided, said that as representing the oldest Scottish Society in London, probably, it would be becoming on their part to take notice of the untimely death of their great and noble Scottish Soldier-General, Sir Hector Macdonald. Few of them who heard the sad news of Sir Hector's death but felt that there had passed away one who had shed lustre on the name of his country. He was one who filled a place in the history not only of Scotland but of England, and, rising as he had done from the ranks, he was held up as an example and encouragement to all young men who desired to enter the service of the country. Mr Ritchie concluded by moving that letters of condolence be forwarded to Lady Macdonald and other relatives in this hour of severe bereavement and affliction. Surgeon-General Don seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

LONDON ARGYLLSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting of the London Argyllshire Association on Wednesday evening—Mr Samuel Greenlees presiding—the following resolution was unanimously carried, on the motion of Dr. Cameron Gillies:—"That the committee of the London Argyllshire Association as Highlanders desire, in the name of their people, and for the sake of their traditions, to express and record their disgust at the shameful disrespect manifested by the War Office to so great and distinguished a soldier as Major-General Sir Hector Macdonald." It was agreed that, in the opinion of the committee, the efforts of London Scotsmen should be directed to the erection of a suitable memorial to General Macdonald.

PROTEST BY PAISLEY HIGHLANDERS.

The Highlanders' Association of Paisley have unanimously adopted a resolution expressing their profound sorrow in connection with the death of General Sir Hector Macdonald, also expressing their firm conviction of his innocence, and protesting against what they describe as "the disgraceful burial of the dead hero's remains." The Association have further agreed to co-operate with the other Highland Societies in connection with the proposed memorial.

CANADIAN SYMPATHY.

A proposal is on foot among Scotsmen in Canada to give appropriate expression to their feelings of regret at the death of their gallant countryman, Sir Hector Macdonald.

GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS.

On Thursday night, at a meeting of this Society, Mr. And. Mackintosh referred to the great loss Highlanders and Highland Societies all over the world had suffered by the lamented death of Sir Hector Macdonald. He thought it was desirable that they should notice the tragic event in a fitting manner. After a sympathetic discussion, it was resolved to record in the minutes the Society's deep sorrow at the untimely and tragic death of the distinguished General, their sense of the great loss sustained by the nation, and their expression of sympathy with his relatives in their sad bereavement.

Sympathy from Town Councils.

INVERNESS.

At Inverness Town Council Provost Ross made a sympathetic reference to the late General Sir Hector Macdonald. He desired, he said, in the name of the community, to add yet one further note to the chorus of lamentation which had arisen from every Scottish heart the wide world over since that fatal day in Paris, which so tragically ended the career of their countryman and neighbour. In Inverness they had a special interest in the General's career from the fact that among their own local Volunteers he laid the foundation of his after military greatness. They rejoiced in his deeds of daring and his marvellous military success. Now that he was not, and that only his memory was left to them, he (Provost Ross) would not suggest that a special message of condolence should issue from the Council to the sorrowing relatives, but that the Council should place upon their minutes the simple fact that they joined in the universal note of sorrow which had arisen throughout the whole world over the lamented death of General Sir Hector Macdonald. The motion was unanimously adopted.

DUMFRIES.

Mr Smyth moved that the Council express regret at the death of Sir Hector Macdonald, one of the greatest soldiers Scotland ever produced, and that this be minuted, and a copy sent to Lady Macdonald and his brothers. ("Agreed.")

TAIN.

On Monday evening, at a meeting of the Tain Town Council —Bailie Macleay presiding—it was unanimously resolved to send a minute of condolence and sympathy to the late General's family. Bailie Gallie, in speaking on the subject, said that the tragic end of Sir Hector was a blow to the Highlands, to Scotland, and to the Empire, and that he had been not only a grand soldier, but a grand trainer of great soldiers.

From the Colonies.

Telegrams were received by Provost Ross from Highlanders in different parts of the world expressing the wish that General Macdonald should be buried in his native county. On Monday morning the following telegram was received from Dunedin:—"New Zealand Highlanders lament General Macdonald's death. Trust burial will take place in Highlands.—Mackenzie, chieftain." A wire from Palmerston, Australia, says—"Hope Highlanders insist Sir Hector buried Scotland.—Grant." The following telegram was received by Provost Ross from an Edinburgh officer asking if he could do anything to prevent General Macdonald's body being buried in Paris. "A mistake at the close of life should not obliterate a glorious career. Bring him home, and Scotland will bear the cost." The general impression in Inverness is that the remains should have been interred in one of three places, viz.:—Tomnahurich, which is the burying-ground of the Highland Capital; Dingwall, which is the principal town of the late General's native county; or in the family burying-ground at Kilmorack, which, after all, has perhaps the greatest claim.

Correspondence.

The following correspondence, bearing on the question, has been published. It appears from it that Mr. Wm. Macdonald did not at any time consent to the proposal of the military authorities that the dead General should be buried in Paris, as was erroneously reported:—

Edinburgh, April 4, 1903.

ALEXANDER DEWAR, Esq., Town Clerk,
Dingwall.

Sir,—My solicitors have handed me your letter to them of the 2nd inst., with the print of a resolution passed by the Town Council of Dingwall at a special meeting held on 1st inst. It grieves me deeply that the Town Council of Dingwall should have passed and recorded in their minutes a resolution, the first part of which animadverts upon the arrangements which my son and I made for the burial of my husband, and also that they should have deemed it their duty formally to communicate it to me. I might content myself by saying that it is the right of the meanest family in the land for the widow and son to say when and where the husband and father should be buried; but I feel convinced that the resolution has been hastily passed, and without knowledge of the real circumstances. My husband and I had arranged that until Hector's education was completed we should live very quietly, and when the sad event

occurred I was living at Dulwich, where Hector was at the college.

I did not therefore hear of my husband's death until late in the evening of the 25th. I at once resolved to bring my husband home, but being a comparative stranger in Dulwich I did not know where to go or to whom I should apply. Mr. William Macdonald had wired me the day before that circumstances prevented him from coming South. I therefore telegraphed to my solicitor in Edinburgh, who knew my deceased parents and myself all my life; and you may imagine the anxiety with which my son and I awaited the arrival at King's Cross of the 6.15 train on Thursday evening. Further, you may well suppose that our troubles were not lessened by seeing placards on the streets announcing that with the consent of Mr. William Macdonald my husband was to be buried in Paris the following day (Friday, the 27th). Through the extreme kindness of General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, and of the Lord Advocate, to whom my solicitor was personally known, my son and I were enabled to stop the interment in Paris, and to bring back my husband's body to Scotland. Late on Thursday night I was informed that Mr. William Macdonald was so ill that he could not even go to Paris to be present at the funeral. My son and I then fixed that my husband should rest in Edinburgh. To this we were moved by reasons personal to ourselves, reasons which I explained to those who called to press the claims of persons in other localities. Further, I wished the funeral to be private, not merely because it was my own desire, but mainly because I knew that my husband would have wished it to be so. Accordingly, Hector and my solicitor went to Paris and made all the necessary arrangements. On their return to London they met Mr. William Macdonald and Rev. James Macdonald, at King's Cross, on the morning of Sunday, the 29th, and cordially invited them to join us in completing the last stage of our mournful duty.

Unfortunately, some people who misunderstood my feelings

attempted to alter my plans. I readily forgive them, because I knew it was from love of my husband that their mistaken actions sprang. Nevertheless, their action has been the means of causing me to be misjudged, I am grieved to say, by the people of Dingwall, who honoured my husband, and whose esteem I value on that account—hence this explanation.

As regards a memorial to my husband, I have already given my consent for a simple monument to be placed over his grave, and however deeply I sympathise with the aims of the Town Council, I feel that it does not become me to interfere in the movement.—Yours truly,

C. M. MACDONALD.

Rootfield, by Dingwall, April 7, 1903.

Sir,—I have no desire that any newspaper or other controversy should arise over my dear brother's bones or memory, but in case of any possible misapprehension you will kindly allow me to say with reference to the letter from Lady Macdonald to the Town Clerk of Dingwall, published in to-day's "Scotsman," that I was certainly anxious that my brother's remains should rest in Scottish soil, preferably in his native Ross-shire. I am sure, not intentionally, but Lady Macdonald's letter conveys the impression that I was indifferent in the whole matter, and also that I did not go to Paris at all, whereas, on the contrary, I was not only more than anxious that the remains should not be buried in Paris, but I wired twice to Dr. Middleton there, who was the first to apprise me of the General's sad death, and twice to the Adjutant-General, to stay all proceedings in connection with the interment until I should arrive in the French capital. Accordingly, I left my home here for the Continent on the Friday morning, but was greatly grieved on arrival there to find that my brother's son and his solicitor,

who were in Paris before me, left there for London before I arrived on the Saturday, so that I not only did not see them to confer about arrangements, but had not even the mournful satisfaction, after coming so far, of seeing either my brother's remains or the coffin which contained them. I was pleased, however, that I was able to accompany the remains on their journey to London, and it was at Dieppe, when transferring them to the cross-Channel boat, that I had the first sight of the case containing the coffin. I duly arrived in London, and it was not until late on the Sabbath that I met Lady Macdonald and her son and solicitor, and heard what the arrangements for the interment were.

Personally, I would not have troubled you with this communication, but in justice to the countless friends—the great bulk of them total strangers to me—who have written to me on the subject, I feel I should give this explanation of my position in the matter.

As I am writing, you will also kindly allow me to say that in the numerous letters I have received the hope is expressed that any national monument to Sir Hector will be erected at Dingwall, the capital of his native county, where he was so well and intimately known. For myself I will be heartily and gratefully glad to acquiesce in this matter in the wishes of the friends who are so kindly taking so deep an interest in the movement.

I am still daily receiving numerous letters and telegrams from all parts of the country and abroad, from persons of every rank and class, expressing sympathy and the senders' tributes of appreciation of Sir Hector's life-work, and to one and all, with your kind permission, I return my heartfelt thanks. To the Press also, I know that I express my own feelings and those of all the relatives and friends when I say that we feel deeply grateful for their generous tributes to the memory of the departed.—I am, &c.,

WM. MACDONALD.

Junior Athenæum Club, Piccadilly, W.,

April 8, 1903.

Sir,—It was not my intention to notice in any way Mr. P. Morison's letter, which appeared in your issue of 31st ult., in which he states that "no pressure was exercised on Lady Macdonald except by Mr. Weir, M.P., Lady Jeune, and certain other persons whose discretion he very much doubted."

Through the publication, however, of Mr. Morison's further correspondence, and Lady Macdonald's letter of 4th inst., together with the letter referred to, I feel called upon to state plainly, for the information of others, what took place. For the present I will only deal with the matter from the time that the remains reached King's Cross Station. Mr Morison arrived soon after, and was approached by Mr. William Macdonald (the General's eldest brother) and the Rev. James Macdonald (cousin), both of whom accompanied the remains from Paris, and who desired to learn the arrangements for the funeral. These Mr. Morison appeared unwilling to make known. With the consent of Mr. William Macdonald, who was all along most anxious that the funeral arrangements should be made public, a deputation of three gentlemen, representing nearly all the Scottish Associations in London, in which I—a friend of the family—was included, sought an interview with Mr. Morison, which was courteously accorded, and every endeavour was made to point out to him the widespread feeling of Scotsmen everywhere that the date and place of burial should be made generally known in order that all might have the opportunity of showing their respect to the memory of a great soldier.

Mr. Morison's reply was to the effect that it was not a matter of sentiment, but one of "bread and butter," at the same time stating that he was then going to see the Lord Advocate, and later in the day a telegram was received from

Mr. Morison to the effect that he had been unable to see the authorities.

If, as Mr. Morison now states, no pressure whatever was brought to bear on Lady Macdonald, and it was entirely owing to her wish that the funeral should be strictly private, why did not Mr. Morison plainly state this to Mr. William Macdonald and the deputation, and not shelter himself under the Lord Advocate and the authorities?

I venture to say that had he done so, whatever may be thought of Lady Macdonald's decision, a great deal of the present strong feeling might have been avoided.

The Highland Societies in London, whom I, amongst others, voluntarily represented at the funeral and the prior negotiations, naturally express great disappointment at what has happened; and the late General's blood relations are in full sympathy with what the societies have endeavoured to do, and with their views as to what the funeral arrangements ought to have been. The elder brother, Mr. William Macdonald, writes to me on the 2nd inst. to the following effect:—

"Rootfield, Muir of Ord, Ross-shire,

"April 2, 1903.

W. GRANT, Esq.,

"Dear Sir,—Kindly accept the grateful thanks of my family and myself for your very great sympathy with us in our recent sudden and sad bereavement. None of us will ever forget your great kindness, and in thanking you will you kindly allow me to thank, through you, all the London Highland Societies represented by you? Our hearts will ever feel grateful to them for their kind sympathy, and desire to do honour to the remains of a fellow-countryman.—I am, dear Sir, most gratefully yours (Signed).—Wm. Macdonald.
—I am, &c.,

W. GRANT.

Tributes from the Bards.

Rest! brave, true son of Scotia, rest!
The hearts that loved thee mourn thee, done to death.
O! that some javelin thrust had pierced thy breast,
And thou wert sleeping, with the quiet, still breath,
On some Egyptian battle field of thy renown:
Where no envenomed lie, with poisoned dart could pierce
The silence of thy warrior's peaceful grave;
Or bitterness avail, in pursuit long and fierce,
That laid thee low at last, thou bravest of the brave!

ALICE C. MACDONELL (of Keppoch),
Bardess of Clan Donald.

When ages shall roll and Britain unconquered,
Shall stretch forth uncurbed as the ocean's unrest,
When her sons are united in one vaster Britain,
The soul we now mourn shall survive with the best.

And brightly that memory we all mourn so sadly
Shall bejewel Fame's scroll untarnished and pure,
For deathless in glory and thrilling in story
The deeds of our hero will steadfast endure.

RUSTIC BARD.

Stirling, March, 1903

Sleep, warrior, sleep, where the cairn marks thy bed,
Bedewed by the tears of the clans thou hast led:
Nor awake till the red of the morning shall glow
On the Tir na h-oige mountains—O caidil gu lo!

Sleep, warrior, sleep! By the peat fire's flame
To our sons we shall tell of the fields of thy fame,
Of thy heart, brave as lion's and pure as the snow,
Till it broke in its sorrow—O caidil gu lo!

Rev. DUGALD MACECHERN, B.D.

Van of the fight was his—
Face to the brunt of the reddened fray;
Daring and desperate deed,
His was ever the conquering way.

Kin of his blood and plaid,
Here and sundered by seas,
Token speed on of the wish of the heart,
Clasp of the clan which death cannot part.
Peace of the silent God
Over the soldier sod.

Inchinnan. OSSIAN MACDONALD.

Oh, bring him here to Scotland,
For her he often bled;
Let the raven and the jackal
Forbear the mighty dead.

Home to the hills that reared him,
The valiant, stern, and strong,
Back to the land that loved him,
Be he right or be he wrong.

Let those who point and whisper
Shrink from that presence awed;
Leave his body to his country
And his spirit to his God.

Edinburgh. WM. THOMSON.

As true as steel thou wert right to the core;
In thee no baseness, perjury, or lust,
Thy foes admired the stern profile before
Which brave men e'en have grovelled in the dust;
In thee the nation placed a mighty trust,
But now to hide some paltry sin thou've stole
Thy heart's brave action; now the nation must
But grieve to hear the belfry's muffled toll,
And pray, "Amen, may God have mercy on his soul."

ROBERT EADIE.

Balfron, 26th March, 1903.

The man, whose strength was the strength of ten,
Lies cold beneath the sod;
He has taken his case from the courts of men
To the court of unerring God.

He's gone in his prime—the stern, strong head
That guided the stern strong hand:
There was never a fairer fighter bred
On the heath of his native land.

Alas! there are many we've had to lose—
Many we ill can spare!
But the sorest smart of the British heart
Is the Lion lying there.

May the earth lie light, after stress and strife,
On the bravest that e'er drew breath.
At least we can always praise his life,
And leave to God his death.

MELBOURNE SUTTHERY.

While white is the snow on the side of the Ben,
And rivers roar hoarsely all covered with foam,
Though green are the tresses of larch in the glen,
Sad, sad is my heart—he will never come home.

He never will see more the brown heath and stream,
He never will hear more the pibroch's fierce call;
Afar among strangers he lay down to dream,
He lay down to dream, forsaken of all.

Forsaken? If one thing I dare not remember,
Yet can I forget how he conquered of old?
Must I ne'er speak of June in the gloom of December?
Must I spurn all my wealth for some dross in the gold?

ADAM CURRIE.

Sleep, O hero! on the laurels that thy noble deeds have won—
Peerless soldier, death has claimed thee when thy race had just begun;
Scotia lent thee to an Empire to pile glory round its Throne,
And they cast thee, broken-hearted, to thy bitter death—alone!
Wails the Lion for her nursling, for the son to glory born,
In the zenith of his manhood from his martial honours torn;
Not the blow of honest warfare, open-handed in the field,
But the stings of vipers, venomed, that have pierced the warrior's shield.
Alack! who should have loved thee but a callous, snoring pawn,
Pushed consenting to that infamy, that cruel act of dawn,
'Gainst the outcry of thy country, of thy brothers, of thy name,
And the burial of a hero grew an everlasting shame.
Sleep, O warrior! in the shelter of thy heath-clad mother's breast,
'Neath the flood of Scotia's wailing sleep and God will give thee rest!

JOSEPHINE M. MACDONELL of Keppoch.

O-HON-A-RIE! MACDONALD—A LAMENT.

There is nae land like Scotland,
'Tis hame and mother tae.
When troubled sair, an' fain to dee,
Whaur else wad Scotsmen gae?
There's nae shroud like a tartan plaid
For rowin' roond the brave,
An' bonnilie the mountain heath
Can deck a hero's grave.

O-hon-a-rie! Macdonald,
O-hon-a-rie! Come back!
In life we loved you, and in death
We want you, "Fighting Mac."

There is nae place like Scotland
For loyal souls an' true,
An' waefu', waefu' is the land,
For you, brave heart, for you.
Oor men are sad, oor women greet,
An' winna be consoled,
An' Mother Scotland sair this day
Laments her soldier bold.

O-hon-a-rie!

There is nae land like Scotland
Can soothe her bairns to rest,
So lovingly we'll lay you doon
To slumber on her breast.
We'll ne'er forget the dauntless might
That drove oor foemen back,
And, after Wallace and the Bruce,
Remember "Fighting Mac."

O-hon-a-rie! Macdonald,
Oor hearts are sair, sae sair;
In weal we loved you, and in woe
We love you mair and mair.

Glasgow, 28th March, 1903. H. A.

Had Sir Hector Macdonald's burial been befitting the hero, Scotland's grief would be the same, but it would be free from the bitter resentment caused by the utter disregard and defiance of the claims and the wishes of his kindred and his countrymen.

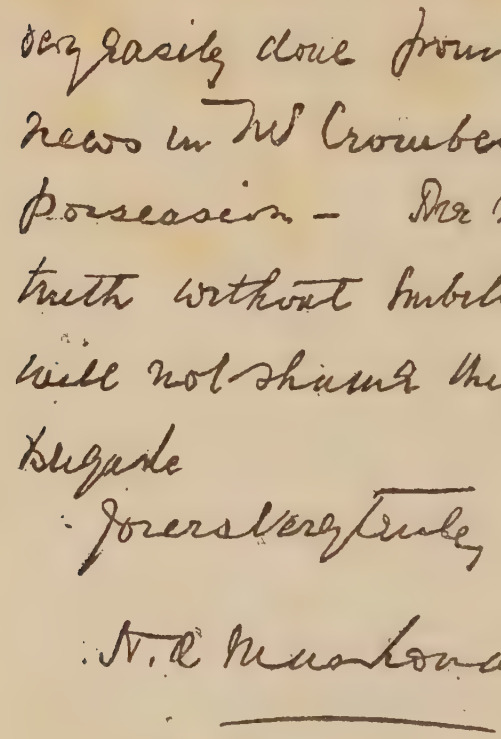
We feel that the bards will be only too glad to have their tributes attached to this memoir of Macdonald. It would be impossible in the time at our disposal to receive their individual permission. They are inserted for Hector's sake.

Bloemfontein.
Orange Free State
March 29. 1900

Dear Mrs. Mackay.

I am in receipt of both your letters of Feby 28th and of a Copy of "The Highland Brigade" You are doing me an honour in proposing to dedicate the New Edition in Course

of preparation, to me
and you have my
permission to close
if you ~~the~~ still consider
me worthy of the honour—
If I might offer a suggestion
I would ask you to have
chapter XXVII re-written
and to include a plan of
the summit of the hill
The description as it now
stands is highly inaccurate
and misleading. This
Could [illegible] be



very easily done from the
news in M^r Crombes
possession — But naked
truth without embellishment
will not shame the
Brigade
Yours very truly
H. R. Macdonald

[*Fac-simile of letter received from Sir Hector A. Macdonald in reply to publisher's request for permission to dedicate to him the revised edition of "The Highland Brigade: its Battles and its Heroes."*]

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